STRUGGLING FOR IDEOLOGICAL INTEGRITY IN THE SOCIAL MOVEMENT FRAMING PROCESS: HOW U.S. ANIMAL RIGHTS ORGANIZATIONS FRAME VALUES AND ETHICAL IDEOLOGY IN FOOD ADVOCACY COMMUNICATION

by

CARRIE PACKWOOD FREEMAN

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Carrie Freeman

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This dissertation has been accepted and approved in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Doctor of Philosophy degree in the Department of Journalism and Communication by:

Debra Merskin, Chairperson, Journalism and Communication
Thomas Bivins, Member, Journalism and Communication
Carl Bybee, Member, Journalism and Communication
Michael Dreiling, Outside Member, Sociology

and Richard Linton, Vice President for Research and Graduate Studies/Dean of the Graduate School for the University of Oregon.

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Approved: _____
Dr. Debra Merskin

Social movements that fundamentally challenge the status quo struggle to connect theory and practice by framing advocacy messages in ways that serve the utilitarian purpose of resonating with mainstream public values while also demonstrating deontological integrity in authentically reflecting their own radical ideology. This study examines the animal rights movement's framing challenges in transforming discriminatory worldviews against nonhuman animals (NHAs) to create respect for them as inherently valuable subjects. U.S. animal rights organizations (AROs) increasingly focus on protecting animals exploited for food, and this dissertation examines frames used in such food advocacy campaigns of five national AROs: Compassion over Killing, Farm Animal Rights Movement, Farm Sanctuary, People for the Ethical Treatment of

Animals, and Vegan Outreach. Using textual analysis of ARO advocacy and interviews with ARO leaders, this study analyzes how and to what extent AROs do or could construct less speciesist frames that resonate with a largely speciesist American public.

Findings reveal AROs framed problems with agribusiness around farmed animal cruelty and commodification, human and environmental harm, and unnecessary killing. Solution frames suggested consumers eat a total or largely plant-based diet, and some proposed industry welfare reforms. To motivate audiences, AROs appealed to values, such as: compassion, sentience, moral consistency, desire to make a difference, choice, pleasurable and convenient food, belonging, life, concern for fellow human beings, honesty, American populism, naturalness, freedom, and American pride.

Strategically, AROs leaders applied both deontology and utilitarianism in choosing to prioritize NHA altruism rather than human self-interest, but most leaders favored utilitarianism in choosing to privilege animal *welfare* over animal rights for wider appeal. Overall, while some ARO messages supported animal rights, promoting veganism and respect for NHA subject status, many frames used animal *welfare* ideology to achieve animal *rights* solutions, conservatively avoiding a direct challenge to the dominant human/animal dualism.

Changes to framing strategy are prescribed in support of frame transformation, such as emphasizing injustice, respect, freedom, life, and a shared animality. This deontologically aligns animal rights theory with advocacy practice in a way that also strategically incorporates both environmental ethics and human rights and merges nature and culture.

CURRICULUM VITAE

NAME OF AUTHOR: Carrie Packwood Freeman

GRADUATE AND UNDERGRADUATE SCHOOLS ATTENDED:

University of Oregon
University of Georgia
University of Florida

DEGREES AWARDED:

Doctor of Philosophy in Communication and Society, 2008, University of Oregon
Master of Arts in Mass Media Studies, 2004, University of Georgia
Bachelor of Science in Advertising, 1993, University of Florida

AREAS OF SPECIAL INTEREST:

Strategic Communication for Social Movement Organizations
Mass Media Ethics
Environmental Communication
Critical and Cultural Studies Approaches to Communication
Critical Animal Studies

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE:

Graduate Teaching Fellow, School of Journalism and Communication, University of Oregon, Eugene, 2004-2008

Ethics Facilitator for Interns, Charles Snowden Program for Excellence in Journalism, University of Oregon, Eugene, 2006-2007

Graduate Teaching Assistant, Grady College of Journalism and Mass Communication, University of Georgia, Athens, 2003-2004

Graduate Research Assistant, Economic Development Coordinating Council, University of Georgia, Athens, 2002-2003

Training Facilitator, LYNX Services from PPG, Fort Myers, Florida, 1998-2002

Leadership Training Coordinator, Palmer Wireless, Inc., Fort Myers, Florida, 1995-1997

Communications Specialist, Gwinnett Chamber of Commerce, Lawrenceville, Georgia, 1993-1995

GRANTS, AWARDS AND HONORS:

The Animal Welfare Trust: Student Grant. Dissertation, 2008

The University of Oregon, School of Journalism and Communication: Val Chambers Graduate Scholarship for Environment and Public Health, 2006

Kappa Tau Alpha: National Honors Society for Journalism and Mass Communication, 2007

PUBLICATIONS:

Freeman, C. P. (in press). *South Park's* animal nature: Comic exposure of animal issues as a social corrective. In M. Leverette & B. Cogan (Eds.), *Oh my God. They deconstructed South Park. Those bastards!* Lexington Press will publish it as part of its Critical Studies in Television series.

Freeman, C. P. (in press). This little piggy went to press: The American news media's construction of animals in agriculture. *The Communication Review*, Scheduled for publication in 2009.

Freeman, C. P., & Merskin, D. (2007). Having it his way: The construction of masculinity in fast food TV advertising. In L. Rubin (Ed.), *Consuming notions: Essays on food, eating and culture.* Jefferson, NC: McFarland Publishing.

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This dissertation is dedicated to the billions of animals who are unjustly farmed and killed to satisfy consumer demand and to the activists who work on their behalf.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Social Movement Framing Dilemmas

For those who believe society needs a fundamental change to the status quo in favor of increased justice and equality, how should they create such change? Social movement leaders have asked this question for centuries. By analyzing their attempts, scholars of social movements have determined some of the criteria necessary to enact major social changes. They suggest social movement organizations (SMOs) take advantage of political opportunities, successfully mobilize and build resources, and frame issues in ways that are meaningful and resonate with the public (McAdam, McCarthy, & Zald, 1996). But the nuances of how to successfully accomplish all of these tasks for different issues, and in different times and places, are still in need of investigation.

Perhaps most applicable to communication scholarship is the framing process, as it is how social movements create shared meaning and participate in the signifying process. Frames make things meaningful, organize experiences, and guide actions (Snow et al., 1986). Frames can be conceived as a reductionist presentation strategy that is informed by ideology, meaning a guiding belief system and worldview (Oliver & Johnston, 2005). Snow & Benford (1988) defined the three core tasks of social movement collective action frames as (1) diagnostic (defining the problem and possibly attributing

blame), (2) prognostic (defining solutions), and (3) motivational (encouraging collective action in enacting solutions).

Social movement leaders may agree on the core problem and even its cause or solution, as they are informed by a similar ideology, but these leaders may become divided and struggle over determining the "right" approach to expressing and framing issues for the public. The answer to what is the "right" approach depends on if one's version of right is more teleological or more deontological. Teleological, or ends-oriented, approaches, such as utilitarianism, emphasize what is most effective at creating the desired behavioral changes that SMOs believe support the greater good. On the other hand, deontological approaches emphasize what is most authentic to and compatible with the SMO's ideology and values, which is related to the broader principle of ensuring one's communication means are ethical.

For example, in fighting widespread discrimination, a challenging movement, meaning a social movement that is counter-hegemonic and seek radical change (Tarrow, 1998), can choose an expedient message that waters down the radical aspects of its message or even contradicts and ignores its non-discriminatory values, to some degree, but resonates with many people to encourage small changes. This expedient message may strategically utilize accepted discriminatory stereotypes or appeal only to the public's self-interest. Or an SMO who is part of a challenging movement can, conversely, choose a more ideologically congruent approach that challenges discrimination and does not compromise its values but may not resonate with as many people. Ideally, the best

approach would be both effective with the public and, at the same time, congruent with the SMO's values and vision.

While pragmatic, utilitarian questions of "what works" are important and popular to ask, in this dissertation I prioritize the deontological question of what approach or means is most fitting and authentic for challenging movements, especially in the framing process, so that they construct messages that are representative of the transformational values they aim to instill in society. The assumption is that what is true to a challenging movement's ideology should be publicly communicated as such, in most cases, both to emphasize honesty and integrity in means and to achieve the desired ends of transforming discriminatory worldviews. This is inspired by Foucault's (2000) statement encouraging radical criticism as a necessary constructor of discursive transformation: "For a transformation that would remain within the same mode of thought, a transformation that would only be a certain way of better adjusting the same thought to the reality of things, would only be a superficial transformation" (p. 457). By expressing their oppositional ideology, social movement discourse should result in people having "trouble thinking things the way they have been thought" (p. 457).

Animal Rights Movement Framing Dilemmas

An example of a challenging movement struggling over the best framing approach is the animal rights movement. Animal *rights* can be defined as a duty-based or deontological ethic that grants nonhuman animals the right to privacy and freedom from human intrusion (Hall, 2006a; Regan, 1983). It argues against use and domination in favor of freedom. Animal rights is ideologically more radical than animal welfare.

Animal *welfare* can be defined as a mainstream Western philosophy that regulates animal exploitation to reduce the suffering of nonhuman animals who are under human control (Francione, 1996; Hall, 2006a). Francione (1996) stated that animal welfare has the following characteristics: (a) it recognizes animal sentience but believes nonhuman animals are not as worthy of moral respect as are humans, (b) it recognizes the property status of nonhumans while wanting to limit the rights of property owners, and (c) it accepts trading away the interests of nonhumans in favor of human interests only if the latter are deemed significant and necessary.

The animal rights movement seeks a transformation in values from one that discriminates against other animals, as being less morally relevant than humans, to one that conceives of other animals as inherently valuable subjects with interests that deserve respect, more similar to how humans respect each other as subjects (Francione, 1996; Regan, 2003; Singer, 1990). A desired consequence of this worldview transformation would be an end to the domestication, enslavement, and exploitation of nonhuman animals by humans. To end exploitative practices, animal rights organizations (AROs) often struggle over whether to use a welfare-oriented frame that is more mainstream and less threatening to human's moral status or a rights-oriented frame that is more "radical" but authentic to the ARO's justice philosophy of directly combating the species discrimination, or "speciesism," that is common in Western society (Francione, 1996; Hall, 2006a).

For example, should AROs help nonhuman animals used in laboratories and farms by improving their living conditions (appealing to people's compassionate values

or even self-interest), or should AROs demand an end to animal use in these industries (appealing to people's values for justice and freedom)? Or is it philosophically logical to seek welfare reform and abolition simultaneously? If the former welfare frame is more effective at enacting some tangible improvements in public behavior toward nonhuman animals, is that preferable to a rights frame that may not produce as many behavioral changes, or not as immediately, but may encourage the public to start critiquing their fundamental belief that it is justifiable to use other animals as a means to an end?

Another line of inquiry related to social movement framing asks whether appealing to an individual's self interest is counterproductive to the long-term goal of getting society to be more altruistic toward a new category of oppressed beings (Cox, 2006; Evernden, 1985). If AROs seek a more altruistic society, should they emphasize altruistic values, even if that might not be the quickest path to effect some changes? For example, If an ARO can convince more people to stop eating animals, or to eat fewer animals, by appealing to legitimate human health concerns, is that preferable to a moral suasion approach that appeals to people's sense of justice and empathy toward others – nonhuman animals in this case? The former, self-interested health frame might be an easier or more persuasive way to get an audience member to stop eating animals, but because the frame does not fundamentally challenge hegemonic views toward other animals, the new vegetarian may see nothing wrong with supporting fur, leather, hunting, or animal experimentation. Would it not be more authentic, and even more strategic in the long run, if each separate animal rights campaign, whether it be against farms, laboratories, circuses, or fur, was informed by the same, core non-speciesist ideology

instead of separate appeals to self-interest or "practical" anthropocentric concerns? I would suggest that the ideal frames are the ones that both resonate with people and openly ask for the kind of radical change in speciesist worldview that is necessary to promote all animal rights issues in the long term.

Similar tactical questions were posed by Francione (1996), an activist and legal scholar, who advocates that AROs should more openly express animal rights ideology:

> Although many animal rights organizations claim to embrace the complete abolition of animal exploitation as a long-term goal, they often couch this message in more "conservative" terms in order to make their message more acceptable to the public. The problem with this approach is that it allows animal exploiters to respond that animal advocates are not honest or that they have some "secret," agenda, which is arguably harmful to the overall credibility of the movement. (p. 117)

In addition to linking expression of ideology with honesty and communication ethics, Francione advocates that activists should control the discourse so it remains focused on nonhuman animals and moral issues instead of human self-interest.

Dissertation Topic and Methodology

I will be examining the role of values and ideology in the framing process of challenging movements by looking at the specific case of how five national AROs in the United States currently frame issues and values in their advocacy related to food and farmed animals. Because most AROs do not have broad campaigns promoting animal rights in general, communication scholars must study animal rights ideology through the

more specific campaign issues that AROs address, such as food, as these campaigns express organizational priorities and provide a vision for the kind of values and better world they envision.

To express animal rights values, ARO food campaigns promote diets that are vegan (totally plant-based) or vegetarian (meat-free) and critique the use and exploitation of animals for food, especially in animal agribusiness and commercial fishing. These food campaigns may include some of the same concerns that animal welfare organizations address, namely demanding less cruel treatment of farmed animals. But the latter frame does not specifically promote non-speciesist values, or animal rights ideology, as it fails to critique the right of humans to domesticate and use other animals for human food. In this dissertation, I argue in favor of AROs demonstrating ideological integrity by emphasizing their non-speciesist values in food advocacy. The analysis examines the ways in which ARO food messages promote non-speciesist values and/or promote anthropocentric values or values that are more moderate, mainstream, and expedient. These latter values can be altruistic, as in showing kindness toward farmed animals, and/or they can be self-interested, as in valuing one's health through eating safe, healthy food and living in a clean environment.

Through a textual analysis of ARO food advocacy materials, I examine how AROs construct other animals and frame their issues, paying particular interest to the construction and framing of the *human* animal and values regarding other animals. The reason for this focus on human values is that one can assume that ARO campaigns will likely show nonhuman animals as sentient beings who suffer greatly, but the real question

is do *humans* care enough to do anything to improve the situation for these animals? We humans are the only species who can change this situation, as we endorse it legally, financially, and socially through the common habit of farming animals, fishing, and meat-eating. Therefore, the positioning of the human subject will be examined in terms of what values AROs are suggesting that humans do or should possess.

For example, are some of these values representative of the non-speciesist values animal rights activists possess? How are humans made to see themselves in relation to other animals, and does this representation challenge the false human/animal dualism that serves as the justification of humans' systematic discrimination of other animals? Hall (2006a), an activist and legal scholar, agreed that AROs should emphasize humans in terms of interrogating our values: "The essential question is about us – those in the class that, at any given time, decides, argues, declares, and objectifies. What creates our interest in domination?" (p. 75).

To examine ideology in activist frames and discourse, I conduct in-depth phone interviews with ARO directors and textual analysis of their current print and electronic food advocacy materials, such as Web sites, videos, brochures, leaflets, advertisements, and collateral materials. To serve as illustrative examples, the five AROs most actively engaged in national food advocacy in the United States are selected. The research questions are largely informed by communication theory, particularly social movement literature on framing and, to a lesser degree, communication ethics, all of which are discussed in Chapter Three. The research is also informed by Western philosophy regarding humans' relation to other animals, including animal rights, environmental

ethics, and vegetarian philosophy, which is thoroughly discussed in a separate theory chapter on animal issues in Chapter Two.

These two theory chapters inform an analysis of the framing process and the AROs' communication strategies as well as the ideological content and meaning of that communication. This expresses a belief that the communication process is not just a vehicle that can be separated from the communicator or the meaning he/she creates (Hall, 1997). In this way, for animal rights advocacy to have integrity, it should connect theory and practice by connecting animal ethics with communication ethics.

Through analyzing food advocacy and talking to ARO leaders, I determine answers to *what* and *how* questions, such as: what problems and solutions do AROs define through their frames; what values do AROs say humans possess or should possess; to what extent are these values self-interested or altruistic; how do AROs create alignment between their values and those of the public; and to what extent are these values congruent with animal rights ideology and the ARO's mission. Additionally, the interview method helps answer questions relating to *why* frames are constructed as they are and to understand how animal rights leaders explain and justify their framing choices in terms of ethics and ideology.

All of this description leads to a prescriptive question about the implications of ARO framing choices for animal ethics, communication ethics, and communication strategy. This is discussed in the conclusion chapter, including an examination of frames that are most supportive of animal rights ideology and/or are examples of frame transformation, a frame alignment process that promotes a change in value systems or

ideology (Snow et al., 1986). I believe this transformation in humans' conception of themselves in relation to other animals is a necessary component of any societal progression toward animal liberation. The question is, do major AROs agree, and, if so, how do they construct less speciesist frames that resonate with a largely speciesist American public?

Significance of the Study

At first glance this dissertation topic of animal rights and farmed animal issues might seem narrow and trivial in comparison to the more prioritized, anthropocentric topics Americans are accustomed to seeing in the news media and exploring in academia. If critical/cultural studies notions of hegemony are applied to this situation, it explains that just because a topic, like animal rights in general or farmed animal exploitation in particular, has been marginalized in society and therefore seemingly has little influence does not mean that it *is* unimportant or deserves to be. The construction of knowledge in this dissertation raises the status of the topic and also remedies the lack of attention nonhuman animals receive in academia, particularly in communication studies.

But the topic has importance whether academics study it or not. The ARO advocacy material problematizing animal-based food reaches millions of people a year, and not just as a fleeting advertisement that may go unnoticed but typically as information that is sought out by individuals (Web sites) or willfully accepted when offered (leaflets). Yet, admittedly, it is still a minority voice when compared to the prominence of daily discourse generated by the animal food industry and its retailers.

But this minority voice protecting nonhuman animals serves an important function of openly critiquing the major discourse on food in all other mainstream media, as that discourse rarely includes an animal rights perspective that challenges the basic premise that it is acceptable to raise and kill someone else for food (Freeman, in press). In daily consumption of mainstream media discourse, a viewer would not typically be alerted to ethical issues involving the environment or other animals in relation to food. Food is usually constructed around the concepts of pleasure, nutrition, or economics not around the concepts of justice, ethics, and sustainability (Freeman, in press). These attempts by AROs to make production and consumption of animal-products an ethical issue, or at least a problem, represent an important challenge not only to mainstream food industry discourse but also to American social norms and basic ideals about who it is morally acceptable to use and kill and who pays the cost for America's food choices.

While the goals of this dissertation could be accomplished by examining the framing of other animal advocacy issues besides food, such as vivisection or fur, food was selected because it has become a major focus of the animal rights movement in the last decade. AROs have acknowledged that animal agriculture and commercial fishing are responsible for the overwhelming majority of nonhuman animals killed in the United States (FARM Death Toll, 2007). The relevance of the food issue is increased by the fact that it involves the majority of the public more directly than other animal issues because most Americans are raised eating animal products, while most do not wear fur, participate in sport hunting, or conduct animal experimentation. On a personal level,

animal agriculture and vegan campaigns are closely related to my own advocacy, scholarship interests, and experience over the last decade.

Food choices are a key issue for animal rights in general because if people continue to breed, grow or capture, and kill other animals for food when it is unnecessary for survival, then the animal rights movement will not be able to gain significant rights for animals in any other area in which they are commonly exploited (Francione, 1996; Hall, 2006a). For example, why would humans not endorse experimentation on other animals to potentially save human lives or use animal fur for warmth when society allows the needless killing of animals for food every day, ultimately making their lives cheap compared to humans? In actuality, the purpose of animal slaughter is more for pleasure and profit than for nutritional necessity (ADA, 2003), but it will be hard for anyone to envision human society not being reliant on domestication of nonhuman animals if humans' continue to believe their sustenance depends on it.

How the Study Contributes to Society

The findings of this dissertation should contribute not only to academia but to the strategic communication efforts of social movements, particularly the animal rights movement. If this dissertation aids AROs in framing food issues and reducing the amount of animal products consumed, there would arguably be a multitude of social benefits for other animals, humans, and nature. When people choose plant-based foods, especially if they are local and organic, it contributes to sustainability and decreased animal exploitation and suffering. U.S. animal agriculture is responsible for the raising and killing of more than 10 billion land animals annually when one counts those killed at

USDA slaughterhouses, the millions of male chicks killed at egg hatcheries, and the millions of other animals who are estimated to have died before slaughter. The Farm Animal Rights Movement (FARM Death Toll, 2007) uses USDA statistics to tally the annual death toll by species in comparison to the previous year:

> The 2007 total of 10,378 million includes 39 million cattle and calves (about even with the 38.7 million in 2006), 121 million pigs (up 2.6% from 118 million), 4 million sheep and goats, 10 million rabbits, 317 million turkeys (up 5% from 302 million), 28 million ducks (down 7% from 30 million), 9,409 million "broilers" (down slightly from 9,428 million) and 450 million laying hens (up 5% from $426 million).

The suffering inherent in modern, intensive farming and mass slaughter is tremendous and worthy of increased attention as a serious moral crisis (Derrida, 2004; Pollan, 2006; Singer & Mason, 2006). Fish and birds, the animals Americans eat in the highest numbers, are excluded from federal humane slaughter laws, leaving them largely devoid of legal protection.

In addition to raising land animals, humans also raise fish in close confinement (aquaculture) as well as commercially hunt them in the world's oceans, reputedly causing the near extinction of many sea species, which has widespread ecological repercussions (Singer & Mason, 2006). The sea animal lives taken are only recorded by weight, not by individual, but it is estimated that 17 billion animals from the sea are eaten in America annually, not including the approximately 25 percent additional lives lost and wasted as "bycatch" (Singer & Mason, 2006, p. 112). If one includes sea animals in addition to land

animals, Americans are responsible for the killing of more than 3 million nonhuman animals every hour of every day.

If there were no other food humans could eat to survive, then these deaths may be more justifiable, although the numbers need not be so high, but the existence of at least a million American vegans, people who eat only plant-based foods, proves animal products are largely if not completely unnecessary to human survival if a variety of plant proteins are accessible (Maurer, 2002). The American Dietetic Association (ADA, 2003) acknowledged the health benefits of a balanced plant-based diet at meeting human nutritional requirements. Because plant foods contain fiber but do not contain any cholesterol nor as much saturated fat as most animal foods, the ADA acknowledged the role of a plant-based diet in preventing diseases common to Americans:

> Vegetarians have been reported to have lower body mass indices than nonvegetarians, as well as lower rates of death from ischemic heart disease; vegetarians also show lower blood cholesterol levels; lower blood pressure; and lower rates of hypertension, type 2 diabetes, and prostate and colon cancer. (ADA, 2003, Abstract section)

This is not to suggest that one cannot be healthy on a diet that includes minor amounts of animal products, especially if organic, but this information is provided just to acknowledge that a plant-based diet can sustain a healthy life and often times one that includes less health risks than meat-eaters face.

Animal-based foods are related to both issues of nutritional excess and deficiency. Considering America's obesity crisis and the prediction that because of the diseases

related to obesity children today may not live as long as their parents, healthy food choices need to become a national priority (Pollan, 2006; Singer & Mason, 2006). Another critical humanitarian health crisis is the millions of people worldwide who die of hunger-related causes annually due in part to inequitable food distribution. America produces enough plant food to feed the hungry worldwide, but the nation inefficiently uses most of its plant crops, particularly grain and soy, to fatten farmed animals, which also unsustainably uses other life-sustaining resources, such as water and energy (Global Hunger Alliance, n.d.; Robbins, 1992; Well-Fed World, n.d.).

This alludes to environmental problems associated with animal agribusiness. Magazine editors at the World Watch Institute (World Watch, 2004) concluded:

> The human appetite for animal flesh is a driving force behind virtually every major category of environmental damage now threatening the human future – deforestation, erosion, fresh water scarcity, air and water pollution, climate change, biodiversity loss, social injustice, the destabilization of communities and the spread of disease. (p. 12)

Similarly damning, a report by the United Nations (UN) (FAO, 2006) described animal agriculture as "one of the most significant contributors to today's most serious environmental problems" (para. 2), acknowledging it as a major contributor to water pollution, land degradation, loss of biodiversity, and deforestation, including tropical rainforest destruction. The UN (FAO, 2006) reported that "livestock now use 30 percent of the earth's entire land surface, mostly permanent pasture but also including 33 percent of the global arable land used to producing feed for livestock" (para. 8). Confined animal

feeding operations, also called "factory farms," and all the plant crops required to feed these billions of animals, cause pollution and use significantly higher amounts of resources such as soil, water, land, and energy than does a plant-based diet (Singer & Mason, 2006).

Human-induced climate change is perhaps the largest crisis facing the world, as it has the potential to kill most of the living beings on this planet. The UN concluded that a meat-based diet is a major culprit in contributing to global warming because raising livestock generates 18 percent of the world's greenhouse gas emissions, proving even more damaging than transportation (FAO, 2006). And as the United States and Europe tighten their environmental and animal welfare regulations, a continued demand for animal-based foods sends factory farms to developing countries, exporting the environmental, health, and welfare problems across the globe (Nierenberg, 2003).

How the Study Contributes to Academia

This dissertation will contribute to bodies of knowledge in social movement theory, framing, rhetoric, public relations and advocacy communication, communication ethics, critical/cultural studies, and animal ethics by examining how organizations in challenging movements utilize and construct values in the framing process. It particularly examines how SMOs might use progressive ideology to inform frames in an attempt to transform values and how these values can be made resonant with the public. It analyzes how and why an SMO may choose to avoid espousing its ideology in frames, in some cases, in an attempt to effect a desired change either by appealing to more accepted values or by an indirect appeal to a different issue of greater concern to the public. The

latter utilitarian framing approach may be more effective in some ways and create greater resonance, but it may pose ethical and strategic issues.

This dissertation should help build knowledge regarding the framing process, especially in social movement literature and particularly in the frame transformation alignment process, which Benford and Snow (2000) regard as understudied. Additionally, it contains elements that help build a foundation for the weak literature on social movement public relations strategies and ethics, as the public relations literature mainly emphasizes corporate or mainstream organizational communication (Holtzhausen, 2000; Smith & Ferguson, 2001). Finally, it builds knowledge on the communication strategies of the animal rights movement specifically, forming the basis for a typology of ARO framing of food issues and vegetarianism. It also contributes to theory building in animal rights ideology and how it can be strategically communicated.

Researcher Perspective

Following the critical/cultural studies research paradigm, I bring a critical and engaged perspective to this project which should be openly acknowledged. As an activist, I have worked to improve the strained, unhealthy, and inequitable relationship between humans and all other animals and the natural world. As an academic, I am motivated to study how communication can improve this relationship so it is more equitable and just. Because the animal rights and environmental movements contribute to creating these more equitable relations, they are a natural research focus. These movements are an extension of human social justice movements which work toward moral progress, such as movements to help women and racial minorities overcome oppression.

I became involved in animal rights and environmental issues in 1989 and consider myself a grassroots activist in these movements, especially the animal rights movement. Toward that end, I have founded and run several grassroots organizations that support animal rights, such as a vegetarian society in Southwest Florida and a campus animal rights group at the University of Georgia. During the writing of this dissertation, I served as Co-Director of University of Oregon's student animal rights group, Students for the Ethical Treatment of Animals. Due to my concerns about exploitation of animals, I try to minimize my personal contribution to this exploitation, such as through adopting a vegetarian then vegan diet in the mid 1990s. Because of the magnitude of animal exploitation in the food industry and the myriad social and environmental benefits to which veganism contributes, I believe that promoting a vegan diet should be a priority for the animal rights movement as well as the environmental movement. Therefore, I have made animal agribusiness and food a priority in my own activism as well as in my academic research.

This personal engagement in the topic of study offers research benefits and limitations. The risks include being too close to the data to see its strengths and, particularly, its weaknesses or being hesitant to be too critical of the AROs. The benefits include having a deep knowledge and understanding of animal rights issues and their strategic communication challenges, based on personal experience. I am also able to easily gain access to ARO leaders and earn their trust, as I am a fellow member of the movement. In addition, the passion I have for the topic and its importance serves as a

daily motivation for the research process and creates a sincere desire to produce rigorous, high quality results that are helpful to the movement and foundational to academia.

Word Choice

In this dissertation, I use the term *farmed* animal instead of *farm* animal to acknowledge that farming is something done to these beings, or forced upon them, not something inherent to their nature – just as other scholars have chosen to use the term *enslaved person* instead of labeling someone a *slave* (Allen, 2006; Brown, 2004; Dunayer, 2001; Spiegel, 1996). Additionally, to help linguistically deconstruct the human/animal dualism, I emphasize that humans are animals by using the term *nonhuman animal* (NHA), instead of just *animal,* when it is necessary to distinguish all animals other than humans.

Dissertation Overview

To begin to examine ARO framing dilemmas related to ideology and values in food advocacy, the next chapter, Chapter Two, offers a broad context on Western society's views on NHAs, the philosophical strengths and challenges of animal rights ideology and its deconstruction of the human/animal dualism, the development of the American animal protection movement, and views on vegetarianism. Chapter Three provides a framework for academic literature and theory on strategic communication, especially as it relates to social movements and their framing challenges, including framing animal rights and vegetarianism, specifically. Chapter Four outlines the seven research questions, explains the textual analysis and interviewing methods used to answer them, and describes the five AROs and their food advocacy text that was selected for

examination. Chapter Five provides the findings from the analysis of the first six research questions, comprising the *de*scriptive and empirical portion of the analysis explaining how AROs are framing food issues and why. Chapter Six serves as a discussion and conclusion, comprising the *pre*scriptive portion of the analysis. It answers the last research question regarding the implications of ARO framing choices in terms of communication theory and animal ethics, it connects theory and practice by making framing recommendations in support of ideological integrity and frame transformation, and it discusses the findings' application to communication theory and literature.

CHAPTER II

THEORY AND LITERATURE REVIEW ON HUMAN AND NONHUMAN ANIMAL RELATIONS

Introduction

In this chapter I cover broad territory in reviewing Western society's past and current relationships with and beliefs about fellow animal beings, including views on nature and using other animals for food. I also use this chapter to explain animal rights ideology and activism, exploring its strengths and attempting to overcome its contradictions. This animal rights ideology serves as a philosophical basis for my dissertation analysis assessing the ways in which animal rights organization (ARO) message frames are informed by or supportive of this ideology.

I begin broadly with the history of Western philosophy regarding other animals and progress to explain modern animal rights philosophy and the philosophical challenges of deconstructing the false human/animal dualism. I consider environmental ethics as an umbrella philosophy promoting a non-anthropocentric worldview, so I explore the challenges and logic of situating animal ethics within environmental ethics to gauge how the two may mutually inform animal activism. I then cover the history of animal rights activism and vegetarian activism in the United States, ending with a review of the development of vegetarian ethics throughout Western history and the status of vegetarianism today.

Major philosophical themes of this chapter include: defining what constitutes necessary use and suffering of other animals in human ethics; deciding if and how human ethics, particularly as it relates to eating animals, is informed by both nature and culture in moderating the human propensity for excess; reconciling the holistic/group ethic of environmental philosophy with the individualistic ethic of human and nonhuman animal (NHA) rights; reconciling whether animal rights philosophy is too humanist to encourage humans to embrace their animality; and exploring a place for the concept of diversity in an animal rights philosophy built on promoting similarity. By addressing strengths and weaknesses in animal ethics, environmental ethics, and vegetarian ethics, I hope to bolster the philosophical approach to animal activism through a much deeper understanding of how to foreground the logical fallacies which undermine the humanist discourse that both animal rights activists and animal exploiters struggle to define.

History of Western Thought on Other Animals

Since its birth in ancient Greece, Western philosophy has largely focused on a privileging of the human subject. Schmidtz (2002) claimed that philosophy has historically been an examination of the following three anthropocentric projects: determining human's essence, specifying how humans are different from all other species, and specifying what makes humans morally important. Dallery (1999) also noted how few philosophies had anything to say about human-animal kinship, yet philosophers were, "obsessively concerned to establish the difference between human and animal nature" (p. 252). Singer, a utilitarian philosopher and NHA advocate, chastised the field of philosophy for its inherent anthropocentrism, claiming it had failed both to challenge

accepted beliefs and to justify its assumption of human dignity (Linzey & Clarke, 2004). Singer (1990) pointed out how convenient this uncontested anthropocentrism is by asking, "Why should we not attribute 'intrinsic dignity' or 'intrinsic worth' to ourselves? Fellow humans are unlikely to reject the accolades we so generously bestow on them, and those to whom we deny the honor, are unable to object" (p. 239).

As Singer insinuated, most philosophies are not only focused on humans, they also assume humans are morally superior. Taylor (1993) claimed that the following three traditions were mainly responsible for constructing the idea of human superiority: Greek humanism and its privileging of man's rationality; Cartesian dualism which divided animals into humans who possess a mind and a soul and other animals who only possess a body; and the Judeo-Christian "great chain of being" that ranks God first followed in descending order by angels, humans, animals, plants, and inanimate objects.

Cavalieri (2006) organized Western philosophy's changing view of other animals into three key historical periods: the debates over kinship versus separation in Classical Greece; Descartes' mechanization of nonhuman animals in the 17th century's scientific revolution; and concerns over animal welfare and rights due to the industrialization of animal agribusiness post WWII. This section explores animal philosophies according to these three historical periods, prior to examining recent philosophies in more depth in upcoming sections.

Ancient Times to Renaissance

Some ancient Greeks proposed a kinship between all animals. Pythagoras believed in the transmigration of souls between humans and other animals, and Plato

believed in humans originating from a more harmonious relationship with other animals (Cavalieri, 2006). In contrast, Aristotle believed in hierarchies and supported a notion of some men, all women, and all NHAs as rightfully existing for the utility of others (Linzey & Clarke, 2004). While Porphyry argued against this exploitative view of other animals, Aristotle's view prevailed at supporting the old order of slavery, likely because it was more easily amenable to emerging Christian views (Cavalieri, 2006).

Lawrence (1995) described the pre-Christian Classical World as possessing a more fluid notion of species and noted that some ancient (and current) pagan belief systems view nonhuman animals as gods, even though many societies hunted and consumed animals. But the Church sought to distinguish itself from paganism by privileging the human man as dominant among animals. St. Augustine and St. Thomas Aquinas aided this by denying other animals any intellect and emphasizing a Biblical notion of man's rightful dominion over irrational brute creatures. Medieval philosophers built upon this religious dogma to assign all NHA behavior to pure instinct, in opposition to the reasoned behavior of men (Lawrence, 1995). French Renaissance author Michel de Montaigne was one of the few of the era who espoused the many qualities other animals shared with humans, saying it was only out of "foolish arrogance and stubbornness that we put ourselves before the other animals, and remove ourselves from their condition and fellowship" (Linzey & Clarke, 2004, p. 111).

Scientific Revolution through the Mid 20th Century

Another influential period in defining animal philosophy was the scientific revolution, particularly the philosophies of the 17th century scientist Rene Descartes

through his construction of the mind/body dualism (Lawrence, 1995). Explicit in Cartesian philosophy is the notion that NHAs do not possess the conscious mind of humans, and nonhuman bodies are more akin to automata. Descartes assigned nonhumans no souls, no language, and no sensations, which strategically enabled expansion of vivisection without guilt or charges of cruelty (Lawrence, 1995). While animal use for a human purpose, such as scientific discovery, was viewed as acceptable, the level of suffering seen in vivisection became an issue (Cavalieri, 2006). A Cartesian logic provided scientists an excuse to dismiss the cries from nonhumans as mere "mechanical reactions" (Lawrence, 1995, p. 76). This division between humans and nonhumans is still reflected in a general scientific rule to avoid anthropomorphizing nonhumans in research.

Other 17th century philosophers bolstered Descartes' mind/body dualism that characterized nonhumans as lacking mental faculties (Linzey & Clarke, 2004). For example, Hobbes privileged humans' language skills and believed speech was necessary to create thoughts which could create a system of justice. Locke admitted that some nonhumans could reason but privileged humans' ability to reason *abstractly*. Similar to Kant, Locke protected a human's right not to be used as a slave but determined it was acceptable to use NHAs so long as they were put to good use in the service of humanity. Both philosophers held the general sentiment of the time that it was wrong to cause a nonhuman to suffer wantonly, as that constituted cruelty. The primary reason animal cruelty was deemed immoral, however, was out of an anthropocentric concern that it lead to inhumanity in dealings with other humans (Linzey & Clarke, 2004).

By the 18th and 19th centuries, animal suffering had become more of a concern, especially among utilitarians such as Jeremy Bentham and John Stuart Mill and also Reverend Herman Daggett and Kantian philosopher Arthur Schopenhauer (Linzey & Clarke, 2004). All acknowledged the sentience of many animals, meaning their ability to feel mental and physical pain and pleasure, and called for restrictions in human's use of them to only what was necessary – such as for food and certain useful research. Their concern for sentience prompted them to call for greater humane treatment of the animals humans were using.

Human's ability for abstract thought and higher consciousness was a focus of 19th century philosophers Schopenhauer, Hegel, Marx, and Nietzsche (Linzey & Clarke, 2004). While they all believed abstract thought was a differentiating feature of humans and other animals, not everyone conceived of it as a benefit for humanity. Schopenhauer and Nietzsche both critiqued humans' abstract thoughts as alienating us from a connection to the natural world. Nietzsche believed humans' evolution as social animals necessitated a sophisticated communication system, but the high level to which abstract thought had developed was now harmful by privileging the shallowness and superficiality of the symbolic over the real. Conversely, Hegel saw humans' knowledge of universals positively, as a way to transcend the immediate, providing a mechanism for control over thoughts, principles, and development. Marx viewed human consciousness as enabling self-awareness as a free being, creating the freedom to produce beyond need.

In the late 19th century, American zoologist J. Howard Moore preached against human bias and the discrimination of NHAs in anticipation of Singer's (1990) notion of

speciesism. Moore noted, "The philosophies of this world have all been framed by, and from the standpoint of, a single species, and they are still managed and maintained in the interests of this species" (Walters & Portmess, 1999, p. 128). Moore called humans bigoted, saying humans had become the "butchers of the universe" (p. 129). Noting the value of necessity in determining ethical actions, Moore claimed that humans sacrifice the sacred interests of others for themselves – even if those interests are merely "human comfort, curiosity, or pastime" (p. 130). To describe human mistreatment of other animals, Moore often used crime terminology, believing discrimination against NHAs was akin to other crimes, such as racism and exploitation in general:

> There is, in fact, but one great crime in the universe, and most of the instances of terrestrial wrong-doing are instances of this crime. It is the crime of exploitation – the considering by some beings of themselves as ends, and of others as their means – the refusal to recognize the equal, or the approximately equal, rights of all to life and its legitimate rewards – the crime of acting toward others as one would that others would *not* act toward him. (Walters & Portmess, 1999, p. 133)

Moore referred to humans as "a globeful of lip-virtuous felons!" (Walters & Portmess, 1999, p. 131), especially noting the hypocrisy of Christians who ridiculed those animal activists who were trying to do something about this "hemorrhage wide as the continents" (p. 131). Similarly, Romain Rolland, the writer, pacifist, and Nobel Laureate noted that most humans not only refused to acknowledge their cruelty toward other animals as *criminal*, but they criticized anyone who defined these actions as such. Rolland stated: "Thousands of animals are uselessly butchered every day without a

shadow of remorse. If any [man] were to refer to it, he would be thought ridiculous. And that is the unpardonable crime" (p.137). Rolland acknowledged that if those who were sympathetic to animals did not admit that suffering was part of nature, they could be derided as sentimentalists. But despite admitting the harsh reality of nature, Rolland encouraged humanity to lesson the amount of suffering it caused when it could chose to do so, such as with diet (Walters & Portmess, 1999).

Although Moore mentioned rights for nonhumans, it was the 19th century British writer, teacher, and humanitarian Henry Salt who is credited with first transferring the concept of human rights to nonhumans, proposing the two causes were connected (Walters & Portmess, 1999). Salt conceived of NHAs as individuals who deserved to live their lives within the same limited freedoms that humans enjoyed, where violence (and restrictions on freedoms) was only justified when absolutely necessary. Twentieth century theologian and physician Albert Schweitzer expanded on this by extending humans' ethical responsibilities out not only to other sentient animals but also to all living species (Linzey & Clarke, 2004). Schweitzer defined ethical behavior as that which encourages life and avoids injury and destruction where possible. This philosophy of reverence for life earned Schweitzer the 1952 Nobel Peace Prize. Schweitzer acknowledged that because nature often requires the sacrifice of other lives to sustain life, it was a "painful enigma" (Walters & Portmess, 1999, p. 148) for him to know how to live by his ethic in this world. As with other philosophies, necessity serves as a guideline; Schweitzer explained, "Whenever I injure life of any kind I must be quite clear as to whether this is necessary or not" (Walters & Portmess, 1999, p. 149).

In summary, Cavalieri (2006) contended that even though some philosophers of this period critiqued Cartesian reduction of animal sentience and cognition, "Descartes' complacent humanism set the stakes so low that the best most critics managed to do was to go back to a (softened) version of Aristotle's doctrine of animal slavery" (p. 60). Descartes essentially limited the discourse to one of welfare not rights. According to Cavalieri (2006):

> Instead of starting from the question, "How much do animals count?" it started from the question, "How much can animals suffer, if at all? This led to a dispute about animals' mental capacities, with the main normative problem – "Are we entitled to inflict suffering on animals at all?" – disappearing in the background. (p. 59)

Mid to Late 20th Century

Cavalieri (2006) proposed the third key moment in animal philosophy arose in response to the advent of intensive farming of NHAs for food in the post WWII era. This was part of philosophy's contempt for instrumental reason's promotion of uncontrolled technology and objectification of nature. Cavalieri posited that when it came to the animal research industry, Descartes was *proactive* in ethically justifying the scientific status quo so it could develop unhindered, but with animal agribusiness, the industry was *reactive* in attempting to justify itself in response to philosophical criticism regarding the practice of factory farming. While Heidegger and Derrida both critiqued agribusiness by comparing it to Nazi death camps, with Derrida being more critical, they both still largely maintained a privileging of the subject as human. Cavalieri (2006) credited Singer with

transferring the egalitarianism of modern philosophies and asking for moral consistency in applying it to other sentient beings.

Building on fellow utilitarians Bentham's and Mill's concerns for the interests of other animals in centuries previous, in the 1970s Singer proposed that all sentient animals should have their like interests given equal consideration (Singer, 1990). Singer (1990) defined sentience as the ability to suffer and experience happiness, both of which are key concerns in a utilitarian calculation of maximizing pleasure versus pain. Singer claimed that *sentience*, even more so than intelligence, was the most morally relevant trait a being possesses, as sentience is the common denominator humans respect most in each other. To prove this, Singer used marginalized case examples showing humans still care about the interests of sentient, developmentally-challenged humans, regardless of their intelligence level.

If people argued that the morally relevant trait was simply being human, instead of sentience or intelligence, Singer (1990) accused them of species discrimination because they failed to provide a reason for the moral relevancy of species in ignoring the like interests of others. While Singer admitted that it initially seems logical to claim that favoring the interests of one's own species is similar to how one naturally favors the interests of one's own family group, Singer revealed the inconsistency in this argument by saying it would lead to racism or sexism if applied to showing favoritism for one's own racial or gender group. Singer argued that when humans elevate the status of their own species, they effectively lower the status of others, making humans guilty of species

discrimination. To label this discrimination against NHAs, Singer (1990) used the term "speciesism" (p. 6).

Speciesism is linked with racism and sexism, as there are strong parallels in how women and people of color have been discriminated against by being compared to lowly and irrational animals (Adams, 1990; Singer, 1990; Spiegel, 1997). While Midgley (1984) sees race as a more arbitrary category, biologically-speaking, than species or gender, the author agreed that rights movements on behalf of race, gender, and species are ultimately all working toward the same goal of defeating "unfairness" or "unreasonable biases" (p. 101). Biases enable hierarchies, which often lead to mistreatment, where the "superior" group feels justified sacrificing the major interests of the "inferior" group to satisfy their own minor interests (Singer, 1990).

Regan, a deontologist, was also one of the first contemporary philosophers to ask for moral consistency in humans' dealings with other animals, paying NHAs similar courtesies as are shown to other people under a human rights model (Linzey & Clarke, 2004; Regan, 1983). Regan (2004) emphasized rights over interests by declaring humans should respect the right to life and liberty of all individuals who are subjects of a life, regardless of species. Regan (2004) explained that what many animals share, particularly mammals, is that "we are each of us the experiencing subject of a life, a conscious creature having an individual welfare that has importance to us whatever our usefulness to others," (p. 185) and so we all have inherent value. Under Regan's deontological viewpoint, it is immoral to treat those with inherent value as though they are just a utility; all who have inherent value have it equally. Therefore, the fundamental wrong in society

is humans' systemic view of other animals as resources, and Regan calls for abolition of humans' industrial exploitation of them.

Varner (1998), an environmental philosopher, discerned that the difference between Regan's view and Singer's is that the former is more of a rightist while the latter is more of a welfarist. But I discern overlapping elements between both philosophies, as they each seek fairness in extending the egalitarian notions of respect society has for all humans out to other fellow sentient, conscious beings. They both differ from a more broad-based philosophy like Schweitzer's reverence for all life, as they exclude plants and less conscious animals, such as oysters. And with both Regan and Singer, *levels* of sentience and individual consciousness still come into play, as species thought to more clearly possess these human traits become more deserving of moral relevance.

Midgley argues that humans should care about NHAs based on humans exercising compassion, not based on the other animal's interests or rights, as compassion is less abstract and does not ask that all animals be treated equally (Jasper & Nelkin, 1992). Compassion does not require the anthropomorphic identification with other animals based on similar mental states of consciousness. One simply needs to feel sympathy to avoid causing others to suffer. Some feminists, such as those using Gilligan's ethic of care, find Singer and Regan's arguments too individualistic, abstract, and rationalistic and prefer to emphasize kinship and community or connection. They believe we should act not out of duty but out of sympathy and love.

In conclusion, Cavalieri (2006) declared that the post-Cartesian era is over and Western society is now back to the debate that is over 2,000 years old, the "original

Greek appraisal of the worth of other animals" (p. 66). Society is moving beyond the limited arguments over cruelty and pleas for more compassion and is challenging the idea that NHAs should be enslaved. For the first time in history, using philosophical means, "it is now possible to defend the idea that animal lives have value" (p. 66).

The following section includes an expanded exploration of modern, animal-related philosophies from poststructuralist and posthumanist scholars in cultural studies who discuss the strengths and weaknesses of philosophies on NHAs and the role of language and communication in the struggle to transform speciesist discourse. I begin with a discussion, primarily inspired by Derrida, on the basic need to deconstruct the human/animal binary that is at the root of Western philosophy's justification for its discrimination against NHAs.

Poststructural and Posthumanist Philosophies Regarding the False Human/Animal Dualism

Justification for Addressing the Question of Humans' Animality

The two main reasons that Derrida (1995, 2002, 2004) claimed the human/animal binary should be deconstructed are because (1) philosophy has largely failed to properly address the issue, calling into question the very validity of current philosophies, and (2) the effects of this dualism result in untold violence and suffering for nonhuman animals. Beginning with the latter point, Derrida (1995, 2002, 2004) described Western culture's treatment of animals as *violent.* And while a certain amount of violence towards other animals is both natural and traditional, Derrida criticized it in its modern form as "industrial, scientific, technical violence" (2004, p. 64) that results in "unprecedented

proportions of this subjection of the animal" (2002, p. 394). Derrida (2002) claimed, "it is all too evident that in the course of the last two centuries these traditional forms of treatment of the animal have been turned upside down by the joint development of zoological, ethological, biological, and genetic forms of knowledge" which result in the "inseparable techniques of intervention" (p. 394) that now literally transform animals into objects.

Derrida (2004) denigrated the mass slaughtering of NHAs as the "'techno-scientific' pathologies of the market or of industrial production" (p. 65). Consider the condemning terminology Derrida (2004) used in the following quote explaining the need to combat both industrialized violence against animals and extinction of species:

> I have *sympathy* (and I insist on that word) for those who revolt: against the war declared on so many animals, against the genocidal torture inflicted on them often in a way that is fundamentally perverse, that is, by raising en masse, in a hyperindustrialized fashion, herds that are to be massively exterminated for alleged human needs; not to mention the hundreds of species that disappear each year from the face of the earth through the fault of humans who, when they don't kill enough, let them die – supposing that the law could ever be assured of any reliable difference between *killing* and *letting die*! (p. 67)

This quote also expresses Derrida's lack of faith in the law and the animal rights movement's proposed use of the law, based on a humanist model of human rights, as the philosophical basis for solving this problem.

Derrida (2004) did not propose a direct solution but suggested that the industrial violence against animals must and will change, particularly because the "spectacle man creates for himself in his treatment of animals will become intolerable" (p. 71) due to the negative "image of man it reflects back to him" (p. 73). Derrida predicted change will occur gradually, "this transformation will no doubt take centuries, but I repeat, I do not believe that we can continue to treat animals as we do today" (p. 73).

Derrida (2002) did not debate animal suffering, saying "no one can deny the suffering, fear, or panic, the terror or fright that humans witness in certain animals" (p. 396). Further, Derrida (2004) explained that for humans it is our shared status as animals that enables this empathy: "we know what animal suffering is, we feel it ourselves" (p. 70). This last statement involves the human animal in Derrida's (2004) "question of animality" (p. 62), a question Derrida described as "not one question among others" (p. 62) but as "decisive ... in itself and for its strategic value" (pp. 62-63). Emphasizing the fundamental importance of the animal question to philosophy, Derrida stated:

> It also represents the limit upon which all the great questions are formed and determined, as well as all the concepts that attempt to delimit what is "proper to man," the essence and future of humanity, ethics, politics, law, "human rights," "crimes against humanity," "genocide," etc. (p. 63)

Derrida (2004) called for an extension of the trace to the "entire field of the living" (p. 63) and lamented that, instead, what dominated human culture and philosophical discourse on the subject of "something like 'the animal'" (p. 63) was "the gravest, most resistant, also the most naïve and the most self-interested presuppositions"

(p. 63). Derrida criticized the fact that this philosophical discourse is built upon the "phonocentrism or the logocentrism that always trusts in a simple and oppositional limit between [Man] and the Animal" (p. 63). Wolfe (2003), a posthumanist scholar, also critiqued the fact that cultural studies is predicated on the idea that the subject is human, with an implicit and fundamental repression of the "question of nonhuman subjectivity" (p. 1). Likewise, Derrida (1995) stated the question of the animal is constituted within the broader philosophical debate over defining the *who* in the subject and emphasized its fundamental importance to all social problems:

> There is no need to emphasize that this question of the subject and of the living "who" is at the heart of the most pressing concerns of modern societies, whether they are deciding birth or death, including what is presupposed in the treatment of sperm or the ovum, surrogate mothers, genetic engineering, so called bioethics or biopolitics ..." (p. 283)

Derrida (2004) claimed that the way post-Cartesian philosophy has treated "THE (so called) animal is a major sign of its logocentrism and of a deconstructible limitation" (p. 63). Derrida referred to their discourse as *hegemonic* but optimistically predicted that what problematizes it and "resists" (p. 63) it is the fact that "there is a multiplicity of living beings" (p. 63) that humans cannot deny we are part of by continuing to delimit this variety into false categories of human and animal. The purpose of deconstruction, in this regard, is to limit the violence done towards animals. Deconstruction does not seek "to destroy the axiomatics of this (formal and juridical) solution, or to discredit it, but to reconsider the history of law and of the concept of right" (p. 74).

This section goes on to further analyze the discursive tensions in the human/animal binary, such as: inconsistent definitions of the term *animal*, the struggle to avoid speciesist language, the inability to define the human border, debates over whether species should be defined by physical or mental traits, paradoxes over the concept of *humanity*, whether ethics and compassion are cultural verses natural traits, and whether animal rights should promote principles of animal similarity or diversity. By seeking some clarity regarding these paradoxes and tensions, I hope to strengthen the logical basis on which animal rights philosophy can inform animal rights campaign messages.

Inconsistent Definitions of the Term "Animal"

One reason Derrida (2004) claimed that the reductionism inherent in the human/animal binary is problematic is because all other animal species do not constitute a singular group: "I am suspicious of the appellation 'Animal' in the singular, as if there were simply [Man] *and* the Animal, as if the homogenous concept THE Animal could be extended universally to all nonhuman forms of living beings" (p. 63). Similarly, in the introduction to the book *What is an Animal?* (1988), Ingold, the editor and anthropologist, described scholarly discussions about the inconsistencies inherent in the multiple meanings of the very term *animal*. Midgley noted that *animal* has two definitions with differing connotations – a "benign" one that includes humans and a "negative" one that not only excludes humans but represents what is "inhuman or anti-human" (in Ingold, 1988, p. 4). These different connotations, related to whether animality is inclusive or exclusive of humans, both represent and cause inconsistencies. For example, Coy highlighted the contradiction that occurs in animal welfare philosophies

that sometimes use *animal* to mean innocent, "dumb beasts" upon which humans should take pity and other times as living beings on par with humans in their possession of a full range of feelings (in Ingold, 1988). Regarding the former negative connotation, Dunayer (2001) noted that to call a human an *animal* is an insult, "nonhuman animal terms insult humans by invoking a contempt for other species. The very word *animal* conveys opprobrium. *Human*, in contrast, signifies everything worthy" (p. 2). Dunayer stated that when someone says "humans *and* animals" they commit a "verbal ruse" (p. 11) by denying the benign definition of animal that includes humans in the animal kingdom.

Similar to Midgley, Tanner explained the two opposing conceptualizations of animality as (1) a "domain or kingdom" (which includes humans – a scientific taxonomy that takes into account ecological connections/dependence) and (2) a "condition" (which excludes humans and is "opposed to humanity") (in Ingold, 1988, p. 4). In the latter conceptualization, human culture is separated from nature, which is seen as the NHAs' domain. This anti-human condition of being an "animal" represents the distinction between "natural" behaviors devoid of values or reasons and the process humans go through to become enculturated and overcome this animality.

Struggle for Non-Speciesist Terminology

Given this problematic double-meaning of the word *animal*, it is challenging to find a non-speciesist term to denote the proper respect for NHAs. Other animals could be called *nonhuman animals*, as I chose to use throughout this dissertation, or *other-than-human animals*, as both of these labels remind humans that they are animals too. But both of these labels still mark them as an "Other" in negation to the dominant term of *human,*

such as *non-white* expresses a racial hierarchy. Activists sometimes refer to NHAs using the term *being*, as in *sentient being* or *living being*, but this still does not carry the weight of *human being* as far as indicating an implicit dignity; there is no similar English term denoting "animal dignity." Instead of finding a new term for other animals, humans could redefine themselves by using the term *human animal* instead of just *human* to remind them of their mutual status as animals; this may help eliminate the use of the term *animal* as an insult toward humans (Dunayer, 2001). Alternately, humans could simply refer to all animals as *persons* and distinguish them, humans included, based on species names, when needed.

It does seem like some new terms are needed to properly denote the new value humans should be placing on what Derrida (2004) referred to as "the multiplicity of living beings" (p. 63) and our mutual status as members of one group. Some might find Derrida's (1995) and Wolfe's (2003) term *infra-human* too clinical, so perhaps Mitchell's *humanimal* is the best neologism proposed yet (Wolfe, 2003). In addition to carefully phrasing existing words to increase respectfulness toward other animals, I believe the creation of new terms is necessary to circumvent the speciesism inherent in a discourse built to reflect the human/animal dichotomy at the heart of the Western worldview.

Inability to Define Human Borders

In the debate over definitions of *animal,* Derrida (2004) preferred to embrace complexity instead of homogeneity, emphasizing that there are many differences that could be characterized as "uncrossable borders" (p. 66) among all animals, even among humans; this diversity cannot be reduced to just one definitive border between humans

and all other animals, "There is not one opposition between [man] and [non-man]; there are, between different organizational structures of the living being, many fractures, heterogeneities, differential structures" (p. 66). Ucko echoed this claim that the borderlines are blurred, even between mammals and other animals, "Contrary to the normal assumption, the borderline between humans and animals, or more specifically between humans, and birds, fish or invertebrates, is anything but obvious, clear and immutable" (in Ingold, 1998, p. xii).

In fact, Derrida (2004) stated it was very difficult to identify any trait that is uniquely "proper of [man]" or exclusive to humans, "either because some animals also possess such traits, or because [man] does not possess them as surely as [he] claims" (p. 66). Like Derrida, Ingold (1988) stated "no matter the trait chosen, either some people do not exhibit it or else members of some other species do" (p. 25), and Clark (1993) also pointed out that whatever hallmark humans use to distinguish humanity from other animals, there are always some humans who fail to qualify. This is reminiscent of Singer's (1990) contention that there are some NHAs who possess more so called "human" capabilities than marginalized cases of humans, such as infants or people with mental illnesses or disabilities.

Championing the trait of language as a connecting trait, Derrida (1995) explained how the notion of *différance* (meaning's fluidity) related human language to that of other animals:

> I am thinking in particular of the mark in general, of the trace, of iterability, of différance. These possibilities or necessities, without which there would be no

> language, *are themselves not only human.* It is not a question of covering up ruptures and heterogeneities. I would simply contest that they give rise to a single linear, indivisible, oppositional limit, to a binary opposition between the human and the infra-human. And what I am proposing here should allow us to take into account scientific knowledge about the complexity of "animal languages," genetic coding, all forms of marking within which so called human language, as original as it might be, does not allow us to "cut" once and for all where we would in general like to cut. (pp. 284 – 285)

For Derrida, the trait of language that might represent this border between species is analogous to a cut in the subject, which can be marked wherever humans choose. Derrida (1995) lobbied for the cut to include NHA languages.

Other scholars have noted this same futile humanistic struggle for humanity to find a line it can draw in the sand based around one uniquely human characteristic. Lawrence (1995) detailed the many allegedly "human" traits throughout history that failed to be proven exclusively human, such as: making tools, teaching cultural practices, practicing rituals, having unique personalities, being aware of death, building and transforming nature, creating art, practicing altruism, possessing language, and experiencing wonder. Dunayer (2001) pointed to some evidence that traits that define humanity in the dictionary, such as a highly developed brain, organized speech, and abstract reasoning, are not unique to only the human animal in all cases. In a later subsection, one caveat I suggest is that the only trait that seems to define most humans is acting excessively beyond what is natural or necessary. However, Midgley (2004) argued

that philosophers should not be asking what makes humans different from other animals, as we are all complex beings who share many qualities, so searching for one differentiating factor is reductionist and futile. Midgley proposed that philosophers ask what is the best thing about human life, and answer it according to traits which other animals may also share.

Defining the Moral Boundary between Species

While there does not appear to be a distinct division separating *all* humans from all other animal species, Elstein (2003) contended that even *species* is a rather contested and arbitrary, socially-constructed category. Elstein applied ethical reasoning to demonstrate the subjectivity and self-interested motivations of scientific categories and how different types of sciences, and cultures, have different, largely instrumental, criteria by which they distinguish species. Elstein (2003) cited Darwin (1859), one of the pioneering scientists most associated with the concept of species, as saying that species categories are largely put in place for sake of convenience and are primarily based on resemblance. Darwin claimed that the term *species* "does not essentially differ from the term 'variety'" (p. 52). Darwin believed that *species* is an indefinable category where differences between animals were more a matter of degree than kind. Elstein (2003) claimed that, although these degrees of difference represent varying gaps between species, there is no clear way to determine how much of a gap has any moral significance.

Elstein (2003) suggested all moral philosophers should start specifying what they mean when they say "species," as it is not an essential or self-explanatory label that

should continue to be taken for granted. Elstein claimed that a common logical fallacy is for people to say that species distinctions are based on some physical or biological trait, when it is really *mental* traits that they prioritize. *Physical* traits (such as ability to mate, DNA similarities, or physical resemblance) do not sufficiently warrant the exploitation or mistreatment of a species, while *mental* traits (such as language use, intelligence, or sentience) form the real basis for why people say species divisions matter. Elstein did not address spiritual traits, such as possession of a soul.

Elstein's (2003) contention that mental distinctions trump physical ones was echoed by Clark (in Ingold, 1988) who stated this physical definition of species variance, where "individuals of a species are linked by their genealogical connection, as actual co-descendants of a common ancestor or as potential co-ancestors of a common descendant" (p. 3), does not provide a very distinct characteristic to which all individuals within the species relate. The *moral* boundary between species must be determined by something more significant and specific than biology.

To answer this call and be more consistent, Elstein (2003) posited that moral philosophers should switch to defining species by mental traits rather than physical ones. In quite a radical idea, Elstein proposed reducing the myriad of animal species down to four different (but not mutually exclusive) "moral species concepts" (p. 16) which are based on an animal's ability to (1) plan for the future, (2) experience boredom, (3) suffer pain, and/or (4) feel emotions. While this may be an ethical improvement on the more arbitrary way philosophers currently make moral decisions about the treatment of others, I would contend that Elstein fails to acknowledge the complications of hegemonic power

in creation of knowledge (Foucault, 1980). Humans would still maintain the power to define *mental* traits of nonhumans in ways that could just continue to serve human instrumental or commercial interests.

Despite these practical challenges, Elstein (2003) was astute to raise the question of what differences have moral relevancy because it is perhaps the most fundamental and vulnerable question at the heart of the human/animal dualism; it also serves to trouble animal rights philosophy as well. Singer (1990) claimed that sentience was the true moral distinguishing factor in human society, and Regan (2003) proposed the key factor was being a conscious subject of a life. Both of these can be seen as a broader version of the privileging of *mental* traits that Elstein (2003) proposed. They still necessitate a hierarchy, to some extent, where categories of animals must be deemed sentient and conscious enough to warrant fair treatment as a subject; for example, mammals and birds may qualify while oysters or insects may not, or to a lesser extent.

Paradoxes Surrounding the Concept of "Humanity" in Critiquing Speciesism

A large part of humanity's "unease" (Derrida, 2004, p. 73) about its mistreatment of NHAs in Western culture is based on a contradiction between the lofty humanist moral values humans claim to have and the way that "human kindness" is often not reflected in humans' actual relations with other animals; humans' actions seem largely based on self-interested rather than altruistic values. Dunayer (2001) suggested the word *humanity* is both speciesist and unjustified, as it implies that kindness is an inherent part of each human's nature, yet many examples can be given of individual humans failing to show compassion. Likewise, Dunayer critiqued the common use of the phrase *human kindness,*

as if the two words naturally fit together, whereas the term *animal kindness* seems foreign and senseless to the ear. The latter is because humanist discourse precludes association of kindness with nonhumans, but Dunayer (2001) contested this notion by providing some compelling examples of NHA altruism by mammals, birds, and fish.

Some sociobiologists would likely attribute these altruistic acts in species to instinctual self-interest, theorizing the altruism is biologically motivated to ensure the survival of one's genes, even if the benefit to oneself is not immediately apparent and the action seems compelled by reason (Ridley, 1996). Yet while Dunayer's (2001) anecdotal evidence of nonhuman altruism is not scientifically generalizable to the entire species, Dunayer claimed that the very fact that certain *individuals* (human and nonhuman) act with kindness towards others, while other individuals of the same species in similar circumstances do not, demonstrates that instinct is not always the motivating factor determining altruistic behavior.

Mitchell (in Wolfe, 2003) surmised that humans must have some empathy for NHAs because the notion of extending rights to NHAs is "irresistible" (p. ix) on some level. Mitchell explained that this underlying sympathy causes humans to feel both a sense of resistance and anxiety regarding their treatment of nonhumans. The anxiety stems from human discomfort over a faint awareness that "human life as now constituted is based on the mass slaughter of billions of animals accompanied by untold suffering" (p. ix). Derrida (2004) predicted that this "industrial, scientific, technical violence" (p. 64) towards NHAs must and will change, albeit over centuries, because it will become "more and more discredited" and "less and less tolerable" (p. 64) as it becomes visible.

Derrida (2004) believed a driving force of this change was that this violence "will not fail to have profound reverberations (conscious and unconscious) on the image humans have of themselves" (p. 64). Because humans have a high opinion of their moral values, bearing uncomfortable witness to the violence they cause is key to facilitating change. This is why Derrida (2004) referred to this violence as an "intolerable" and a "spectacle" (p. 71). Derrida asked interviewer Roudinesco, "If you were actually placed every day before the spectacle of this industrial slaughter, what would you do?" (p. 71), and before changing the subject, Roudinesco replied that she would not eat meat anymore and would live somewhere else because she prefers not to see it. This answer illustrates a point Derrida (2002) made about humanity's need to avoid acknowledging the violence:

> No one can deny seriously, or for very long, that men do all they can in order to dissimulate this cruelty or to hide it from themselves, in order to organize on a global scale the forgetting or misunderstanding of this violence. (p. 394)

On one hand, Derrida's (2002) and Mitchell's (in Wolfe, 2003) statements admit that humans' collective mistreatment and murder of other species causes us to feel guilty, indicating that these philosophers adhere, to some extent, to the humanist notion that we are a "compassionate" species, yet they also admit that instead of humans mobilizing our supposed compassionate values to end this violence, most of us willingly avoid directing our hearts and minds to this "spectacle" (Derrida, 2004, p. 71) choosing to remain uncomfortably complicit instead. Likewise, Dunayer (2001) stated that one way humans avoid feeling guilty is to construct the notion that "unjustified killing is murder only if the victim is human" (p. 4). Dunayer claimed humans "prefer to couch nonhuman

exploitation and murder in culinary, recreational, and other nonmoralistic terms" (p. 4). The *need* for this detached language also indicates that Dunayer paradoxically shares humanist notions that humans feel a sense of shame and guilt over their violence toward animals. This humanism is apparent in Dunayer's (2001) critique of the deceptive use of the English language: "Speciesism is a lie, and it *requires* a language of lies to survive. Currently, our language denies the harm that humans routinely inflict on other animals; linguistically, both the victims and the perpetrators have disappeared" (p. ix). Hence it seems safe to agree with Derrida's (2002) idea that a human is indeed the "animal at unease with itself" (p. 372) – the animal who suffers anxiety over the suffering they cause to other animals, forcing them to hide behind the lies of a speciesist discourse.

Dunayer's (2001) positions described above reveal the complexity of the humanist tension in relation to animal rights, since Dunayer conceived of humans as a moral enough species to know they need to deceive themselves linguistically in order to continue being speciesist, yet paradoxically stated humans are not inherently moral enough to live up to the term *humane*. Dunayer did not deny that humans have the capacity to be moral, only that morality and kindness are traits *limited* to just the human species.

A major conflict is that the very idea that we should treat nonhumans better may be humanist, in other words, promoting an essentialist and superior view of the human being, as it may privilege humans with a certain ethical status presumably not found in other animals. I contend that if animal activists were to be truly morally consistent, instead of supporting an implicit paternalism or dominionism toward other animals, they

would have to expect all other animals to have ethical standards and duties too (albeit based on their individual capacities and freedom of choice) because activists claim that species differences are more of degree than kind. This is a conundrum. But when it comes to the supposedly humanist ethical standards, is it possible these principles are actually derived from nature instead of culture, and, therefore, might naturally apply to all, or at least some, social animal species?

The Nature versus Culture Debate Applied to the Ethics of Compassion

To explain this idea of a "natural" ethic, consider that human ethics generally value the compassionate tendency for humans to protect the weak or innocent, such as children, from predation and exploitation by the strong; this protection from exploitation is the basis of social justice movements, and on the surface it appears to be in opposition to the harshness of a "survival of the fittest" view of nature. Yet, humans' ethical prohibition against causing harm is legally limited to harm *in excess* of what is necessary for one's survival, and this is a principle in line with what other animals practice in nature that ensures ecological balance. Despite ethical standards, clearly, many humans do practice exploitation of the weak, and to excess of other animals (consider child pornography, slave labor, factory farming, greenhouse gas emissions, genocide/extinction, etc). In fact, I argue that the one trait that does distinguish the human species among most other animal species is their ability to do most things (both "good" and "bad") to *excess* of what is natural or needed.

Throughout history, philosophers have acknowledged humans' propensity for excess, and they have discussed this tendency in both positive and negative terms (Linzey

& Clarke, 2004). For example, Aristotle noted that humans could be the most wicked, cruel, lustful and gluttonous beings imaginable if we misused our prudence and valor (Linzey & Clarke, 2004). Porphyry believed animals are sentient, rational beings who "likewise have vices, and are envious; though their bad qualities are not so widely extended as in men: for their vices are of a lighter nature than those of men" (in Walters & Portmess, 1999, p. 39). Hobbes said that language allows humans to benefit from society and laws but that humans can also use speech for misdeeds, like lying and teaching bad behavior, so that "[man] errs more widely and dangerously than can other animals" (in Linzey & Clarke, 2004, p. 19). Hobbes posited that humans are also more destructive for unjust reasons than are other animals:

> So just as swords and guns, the weapons of [men], surpass the weapons of [brute] animals (horns, teeth, and stings), so [man] surpasseth in rapacity and cruelty the wolves, bears, and snakes that are not rapacious unless hungry and not cruel unless provoked, whereas [man] is famished even by future hunger. (p. 19)

Implying that there are also natural guidelines outside *human* ethical systems, Michel de Montaigne said "animals are much more self-controlled than we are, and keep with greater moderation within the limits that Nature has prescribed" (in Linzey & Clarke, 2004, p. 106).

As humans seek to move beyond natural limits, they create additional choices, which leads to excess. Herder blamed this on humans' sense of free will: "whilst animals on the whole remain true to the qualities of their kind, man alone has made a goddess of choice in place of necessity" (in Linzey & Clarke, 2004, p. 35). Rousseau admired

humans' free will to resist instinct and choose our behavior, specifically our ability to improve ourselves. But to Rousseau this free will was also the "source of all human misfortunes" (in Linzey & Clarke, 2004, p. 33) which "producing in different ages his discoveries and his errors, his vices and his virtues, makes him at length a tyrant both over himself and over nature" (p. 33). Burke described a human as one who is corrupted by his/her pursuit of perfection to ascend in hierarchies and is given to excess in this pursuit; Burke especially noted humans' excessive use of symbols and tools (Foss, Foss & Trapp, 1991).

Coward argued that humans' excess production created hierarchies and social inequalities at an unnatural level, while "in animal societies there's a startling absence of complex accumulation and unequal distribution of resources" (in Linzey & Clarke, 2004) p. 96). Mason (1993) proclaimed the source of humanity's excess accumulation to be agriculture. The domestication of animals about 11,000 years ago created a transition for many human beings to a more sedentary, agricultural way of life. Agricultural surpluses created divisions of wealth. In order to protect this wealth, patriarchal warrior cultures developed, creating oppressive systems of control labor such as slavery and imperialism. While forager societies often viewed other animals with wonder, respect, and partnership (not that some of these societies did not cause extinction or suffering), herder/agrarian societies were more likely to disempower animals in order to control and demystify them. Thus, many societies came to view domesticated animals as commodities and wild animals as competition and pests (Mason, 1993). According to these viewpoints, agriculture is responsible for creating human's ability to live in excess of the natural

limits that tend to guide most other animal societies and keep them from creating the vast accumulations of wealth and resulting social inequalities human society's often exhibit; this excessive human lifestyle relies upon an instrumental view of other animals and nature.

I believe that if humans are characterized by excess, which can lead to both comfort and poverty, good and bad, then an ethical system becomes necessary for purposes of restraint. Western philosophers often lauded humans' ability to think abstractly because it leads to our free will, which leads to our ability to control and choose our behaviors; control was implied to be a positive ability to demonstrate restraint – in the face of both the "sins" of excess choice in a human society and a supposed animal instinct born from nature (Linzey & Clarke, 2004). Ancient Western philosophy valued temperance and restraint as ethical virtues, including restraint in food choices (Singer & Mason, 2006). Yet, while humans have the ability to individually show restraint in the face of choice, as a whole some claim humans excessively decrease choice in environmentally problematic ways. Callicott (1993) called humans "devolutionizers" for the mass extinctions they cause, and Pollan (2006) claimed that humans are "homogenizers" who use science to simplify natural complexity, such as with monoculture crops decreasing natural diversity. Both of these unflattering claims of human uniqueness fit within the broader label of humans as an excessive species who are in need of ethics as a form of restraint.

Environmental philosophy often credits human ethics to biology and evolution, stating ethical behavior is natural, and what is natural is, thereby, good. Aldo Leopold's

(1993) land ethic conceived of ethics as biological, where there is naturally a "limitation on freedom of action in the struggle for existence" (p. 215). Callicott (1993) believed this was influenced by Darwin's evolutionary theories of humans as a social animal needing to create kinship. Callicott argued that ethics would have preceded reason in humans' evolutionary process because humans needed to have complex linguistic skills which come from being social, and being social requires some limitations on individual freedoms. Darwin, as well as David Hume and Adam Smith, all contended that ethics rested on feelings and sentiments, which were found in the animal kingdom (Callicott, 1993). Darwin said that natural selection would privilege those with feelings, as they would be more likely to produce humans who behave in socially acceptable ways. This echoes Ridley's (1996) and Kropotkin's (2004) contention that cooperation is more natural than competition to highly social animals, such as humans. This complements the Nietzschean notion of humans being the "sickliest" (Nietzsche, 1977, p. 580) of the animals for straying so far from their instincts. Nietzsche believed it was healthier for humans to follow their instincts rather than suppress them to fit a religious model of morality.

Callicott (1993) argued that nature is not immoral, as "intelligent moral behavior is natural behavior" (p. 129). Rolston (1993) also argued for a *natural* ethic where right is determined by an ability to sustain life rather than just sustaining pleasure. Rolston said that the is/ought principle, usually seen as specious, can make sense in nature because as humans use science or experience to describe how nature functions and explore the

intricate relationships and harmony, they discover that what *is* often or frequently is what *ought* to be; and it becomes hard to know where facts end and values begin.

I contend that because the human practice, by some individuals, of exploiting or harming other weaker animals *to excess* goes against harmonious or ecological principles often found in nature, perhaps humans' ethical system promoting compassion and protective justice *is* actually based on "natural" principles – both the principle of *cooperation* to garner social support and the principle of *moderation* for ecological balance. I believe our fundamental ethical principles are, or should be, based on the idea of taking only what we need for our basic survival, complementing the principles of deep ecology (Devall & Sessions, 1985), with any excess acts of harm constituting exploitation and a breach of ethics. Ultimately, this moderation is what most other animals already practice, making all animals equally subject to these same ethical guidelines; this notion of equality avoids the humanist tendency to imply that humans should be kind to other animals because we are ethically superior beings. So while we can admit that humans' ethical system may be highly complex and impressive when compared to that of other animals, this high level of sophistication appears to be necessary to restrain our special propensity for excessive harm. Therefore, when AROs promote animal rights on ethical grounds, they should take care not to insinuate that all ethical principles are limited to the realm of humanity or that it makes us "better," as that might unintentionally reinforce the problematic human/animal dualism and related notions of human superiority that lead to discrimination against NHAs.

Tensions over Whether Animal Rights Strategies Should Promote Similarity or Diversity

Contradictions between animal rights and humanism. These inconsistencies associated with humanism and animal activist goals also caused Derrida and some posthumanist scholars to critique the philosophical basis of animal rights, while still remaining sympathetic to the need to end the modern institutionalized violence towards nonhumans. Derrida (2004) contended that animal rights is a flawed concept so long as it models itself after a juridical concept of human rights, as the notion of human rights is based on a humanist "post-Cartesian human subjectivity" (p. 64) that has led to the very oppression that animal activists seek to end:

> Consequently, to confer or to recognize rights for "animals" is a surreptitious or implicit way of confirming a certain interpretation of the human subject, which itself will have been the very lever of the worst violence carried out against nonhuman living beings. (p. 65)

In fact, Mitchell advised fellow posthumanist scholars to study humanism, as it is essential to addressing questions related to speciesism:

> "Speciesism" is ritually invoked in the denigration of others as animals while evoking a prejudice that is so deep and "natural" that we can scarcely imagine human life without it. The very idea of speciesism, then, requires some conception of "the posthuman," an idea that makes sense, obviously, only in its dialectical relation with the long and unfinished reflection on species being that goes by name of humanism (in Wolfe, 2003, p. xiv).

Wolfe (2003) criticized the fact that Singer and Regan's animal rights philosophies are based on humanism, "thus effacing the very difference of the animal other that it sought to respect" (p. 8). It is true that the tensions between the priorities of similarity and difference are essential to the paradox present within animal rights. Birke and Parisi (1999) stated, "The tension between our similarity and our difference from other animals, moreover, informs much of the political and philosophical tension around debates on animal rights" (p. 57). But Ingold (1988) clarified a misconception by stating it is not anthropocentric to show how a particular human trait, even a positive one, is unique to our species, as every species is also likely to have something unique about it. Ingold contended that it *is* anthropocentric, however, to compare nonhumans to humans and expect them to have the same capacities in order to deserve respect, which is something that some animal activists do.

Promoting similarity. This anthropocentrism is especially apparent in Singer and Cavalieri's *Great Ape Project* (1993) where they use nonhuman primates as a bridge species to gain "animal rights" before other animals, based on apes' obvious similarity to humans. But anthropocentrism is arguably apparent, to a lesser degree, in Singer's (1990) and Regan's (1983) theories that use a shared trait between human and nonhuman animals, such as sentience and consciousness, as a reason to include NHAs in our sphere of moral concern. This tactic of promoting sameness and a connection between humans and nonhumans is also indicative of any argument suggesting that there are few, or no, traits that humans possess that are not also possessed by, at least, some other animal species (Clark, 1993; Derrida, 2004; Dunayer, 2001; Ingold, 1994; Lawrence, 1995).

However, before chastising animal rights for implicitly promoting humanism, one must determine whether the activist's line of argumentation is based more on the desire to *build nonhumans up* in the "noble" likeness of humanity (expanding humanity to include other animals) or based more on the desire to *knock humans down* off their self-constructed moral pedestal, encouraging them to embrace, instead of shun, their innate animality (expanding animality to include humans). The distinction between the two approaches is key. The latter approach of encouraging humans to embrace their animality is, perhaps, less humanist and more morally tenable. But it is less commonly used, presumably for the utilitarian reason that it more directly challenges humanism and comes across as more threatening to the status and esteem of the very humans who must be convinced.

Embracing human animality. Yet, if animal activists fail to use the latter approach to convince humans to respect their animality instead of despise it, humans may never treat other animals with more respect. Agamben (2004) noted that our humanity is currently based on how much we control the animal within ourselves, as Western metaphysics defines humanity in opposition to animality. This relates to a politics of excluding someone who must still simultaneously be included. Agamben's (2004) analogy is that the animal in each human is like the sacred [man] of Roman law who may be killed without the killing being considered murder. The animal is held in such an ambiguous place that is both external and internal, where he/she is subject to death without remorse. Agamben proposed a Heideggerian-inspired path of creating a more meaningful life through creating more meaningful, and less instrumental, relationships

with other animals, saying that would simultaneously improve humans' sense of the animal in themselves and, thus, their treatment of other animals.

Abram (1997), an environmental phenomenologist, suggested deconstructing the mind/body dualism that parallels the human/animal and subject/object dualisms by beginning to privilege the *body* as a source of knowledge. Abram (1997) encouraged humans to begin to reaffirm their bodies and physical senses as a communicative site of gaining wisdom about the entire natural world instead of just relying on human symbolic communication and limiting knowledge to anthropocentric realms. By embracing the "primitive" sensual communication most humans have lost, they would expand their knowledge by beginning to relearn and value what other species are communicating. If the body were not separated from, and inferior to, the mind, then humans would not use the supposed superiority of the human mind's ability to reason abstractly as an excuse to reduce other life to mere bodies devoid of wisdom. The body, whether human or nonhuman, would be enlivened as a subject rather than being reduced to an object (Abram, 1997).

Asking humans to begin to respect the body's wisdom and to embrace their animality is perhaps a philosophically rigorous approach to promoting animal rights, but it is not as pragmatic as the more humanist approach of proving NHA *likeness* to humans. The latter recognizes that because people place a high value on supposedly "humanist" traits (such as intelligence, kindness, emotional sensitivity, symbolic communication, education, artistic talent, and spirituality), it is only reasonable that animal activists appeal to the fact that NHAs also *share* some of these respected traits when trying to

convince humans to have higher respect for NHAs (Balcombe, 2006; Fouts, 1997; Friend, 2004; Masson & McCarthy, 1995; Page, 1999). This tactic of emphasizing like traits was used successfully to gain human rights for historically oppressed groups of humans (Bormann, 1971; Campbell, 1989). Therefore, Derrida's and Wolfe's suggestion that animal rights philosophies should be less humanist and should avoid this human rights or "likeness" model of social justice is unsettling and challenging to conventional activist wisdom on achieving social progress for oppressed groups.

Promoting difference and diversity. Another philosophical problem with the tactic of emphasizing that NHAs share many valued "human" traits is that it runs the risk of reducing other animals to lesser categories of "sub-humans." Wolfe (2003) explained that different species cannot be expected to possess "qualities, potentials, or abilities that are realized to their *fullest* in human beings" (p. 53). This could leave NHAs forever stuck in the role of diminished or immature humans, just as humans would always be a diminished version of cats, chimpanzees, birds, fish, or any other species.

Activists and philosophers may also find it counterproductive to insinuate that NHAs are close to being humans but are just *under-developed.* Dunayer (2001) posited that, from an evolutionary perspective, species should not be ranked as more or less "primitive" (p. 13) against the benchmark of humans serving as the "advanced" (p. 13) species. Dunayer clarified, "species don't evolve toward greater *humanness,* but toward greater *adaptiveness* in their ecological niche" (p. 13). This is reflected in the fact that Darwin did not believe in ranking species as higher or lower (Dunayer, 2001).

The case against promoting similarities seems to lead to the somewhat counterintuitive argument of promoting *differences* in order to gain equality for other animals. On the surface this flies in the face of reason. However, toward this goal, Ingold (1988) endorsed Coy's position that, "to defeat anthropocentrism, we must stop interpreting statements about the disabilities of other species as assertions of their inferiority" (p. 10). While other species are different, they are by no means failed or lesser versions of humans.

In exploring the idea of embracing differences, it is useful to acknowledge that the advanced stages of some human social justice movements in the United States have also moved in this direction, as they now promote diversity. The problem with the earlier human rights approach to gaining equality by emphasizing the similarities between human groups (i.e. men and women, whites and blacks, or heterosexuals and homosexuals) was that the historically oppressed groups (or some might say the "marked" or "inferior" side of the binary) were then forced to assimilate into the dominant group's world and live by the standards set by white, Western, heterosexual males. Just as many activists in the civil rights movement do not advocate for complete "colorblindness," under the premise that it would wipe out some distinguishing traits that some individuals value and generally disrespects difference, so too the animal rights movement should not expect people to be blind to the many splendid variances among animals. Activists should ask people to respect these differences, as certainly "biodiversity" is respected as a strength from the standpoint of ecological values. Diversity in both human society and nature is not limited to groups or species but applies

to *individuals* within groups/species as well, or else it promotes reductionist biological essentialism (Clark, 1993).

But as a caveat to totally abandoning approaches that favor inclusion/similarity, women's rights activists and abolitionists did not have to "concede" that women and people of color were not as smart as Caucasian men (which was the general constructed fallacy that historically justified their lower status) by arguing that they deserved rights anyway because America should value diversity. Many would rightly agree that human activists need not concede this, since the capabilities of women and people of color are obviously more likely to closely resemble the capabilities of others of their own species than nonhumans' do to humans. But does this mean that animal activists must concede that NHAs are not as smart (or communicative or kind or sensitive) as humans but say that these differences should not matter in order to gain respect/rights? Many may not want to or feel it is truthful to fully concede that humans and other animals are so completely different.

Blending similarity and diversity. Therefore, the best position may be a blended one that embraces both the fundamental commonalities that provide kinship and the specific differences that provide diversity. While people may come to value NHAs and respect diversity, the concern is that they will still prioritize fellow humans over other animal species if they do not see some similarity that connects all animals together and gives them a reason to value other species on the same level as they value their own species. As a base connecting trait, I suggest that Regan's (2003) idea of being a conscious "subject of a life" may be the best option; it combines principles of both

sameness and difference, and subjective consciousness is broad enough to include many species yet still allow for diversity within and among species. It could be compared to the base connecting trait of *personhood* that has allowed for equality among races, genders, and ethnicities, while still allowing for diversity. Singer's (1990) notion of sentience is quite similar and could also work, as long as the focus expands beyond concerns over bodily suffering and emphasizes their individual *life* and personhood. Perhaps if animal rights campaigns encouraged people to embrace diversity and their own animality it would mitigate some of the problematic humanism inherent in animal rights expanding a human rights model.

The ideas of Deleuze and Guattari (2004) seem to support this notion of blending regarding human-animal relations, as they say animals serve to rupture notions of identity and sameness. In the article "Becoming Animal," they use the Nietzschean idea of becoming over being to emphasize animal-becoming as a way to free the subject from its humanistic straightjacket. They privilege notions of expansion, multiplicity, mutuality, heterogeneity, and rhizomes over more contained notions of classifications, identification, essentialism, and linear progression. Becoming is considered more real than being, as it contains difference and acknowledges how everything is implicated in everything else (Deleuze & Guattari, 2004).

James Urpeth (2004) interpreted Deleuze and Guattari (2004) as seeking a plural monism that enables humans to escape their self-imposed boundaries into more impersonal mutual terrain – a de-territorializing of life that emphasizes symbiosis and alliances. Birke and Parisi (1999) claimed that a Western humanism built on

individualism and boundaries is threatened by symbiosis: "Becoming animal, in Deleuze and Guattari's work, is to experience interchange; it is to question the ideals of humanism and purity" (p. 67). They critique animal rights for seeking to extend boundaries instead of questioning and challenging the existence of boundaries and identities as an othering force.

The promotion of subject consciousness as an equalizing factor seems tenable so long as hierarchies are not reintroduced into the system by assigning higher value to those beings who humans determine most exemplify this connecting trait of being a conscious subject, which is what complicates Elstein's (2003) model. This essentialist logic would send society back to an oppressive system. A key question is whether it is possible for people and most social animals to avoid creating pecking orders of some sort. Human history seems to have proven otherwise; so the human tendency to evaluate, judge, rank, and seek boundaries should be accounted for as a complicating factor in any ethical system.

In conclusion, I see the value in embracing the deconstructive principles of diversity, difference, and complexity, while still maintaining some ethical standards based on universal principles, like avoiding unnecessary harm and valuing sentience, in order to avoid total relativism. Although the constructivist approach to meaning does not allow for belief in one universal truth, perhaps getting closer to any truth comes only through embracing the complexity inherent in a blending of subjectivity and objectivity, or, more specifically, nature and culture. This encourages social constructionists to admit that natural tendencies and ecological principles have some merit and value, and,

conversely, it encourages scientists to be open to the "humanity" of nature, while encouraging scholars from all disciplines to expand their notion of the subject to include animal life in general.

This lack of borders, certainty, and stability makes humans uneasy and instigates a need to create deceptive language that constructs tidy borders. Therefore, problematizing the fragile borders of humanity and species through deconstruction of speciesist language is a worthwhile goal of the animal rights movement. Hopefully it will serve to lift the cloud of deception that constrains humanity and to prod us closer toward a "surrender to the animal" (Derrida, 2002, p. 372) within ourselves.

The human/animal dualism explored in this section can be said to reside within the broader culture/nature dualism in Western philosophy. It is therefore helpful to dedicate the next section to exploring how environmental philosophy addresses the place of humans in relation to nature, or all nonhuman life, and to what extent environmental philosophies seek a less anthropocentric worldview, as animal rights philosophy does. This brief overview of theories on nature will inform my upcoming attempt to situate modern animal ethics within environmental ethics to examine its logical consistencies and inconsistencies. This exploration will help determine the feasibility of incorporating both environmental ethics and animal ethics in activist campaigns on behalf of other animals, such as in vegetarian campaigns.

Western Philosophy and Non-Anthropocentric Values Related to Nature

The environmental movement incorporates a variety of ways to value nonhuman life, with the ends of the environmentalist continuum often defined as "anthropocentric"

on the conservative end and "biocentric/ecocentric" on the progressive end. Regarding the debate between anthropocentric and ecocentric views, Cox (2006) stated, "perhaps no other dilemma so sharply divides advocates in the U.S. environmental movement" (p. 276).

The most anthropocentric viewpoint is one of conservation, where nature is viewed as a resource for human use (Van de Veer & Pierce, 2003). This originated in the sciences and was promoted by Pinchot, a forestry scientist at the turn of the 20th century. Additionally, some anthropocentric viewpoints value nature from a spiritual perspective. According to this view, the need for wilderness preservation primarily depends on how its beauty and "naturalness" make it a sacred place where humans can benefit from being closer to God and reaching a sense of enlightenment not available in more urban, man-made environments. This popular viewpoint historically falls under the umbrella of the preservation movement, credited largely to John Muir, founder of the Sierra Club (Van de Veer & Pierce, 2003).

An alternative viewpoint to anthropocentrism is ecocentrism, which suggests that nature has intrinsic value that merits it for protection in its own best interest, regardless of any separate instrumental value that humans may place on it. Aldo Leopold's land ethic, deep ecology, and ecofeminism may best describe this less anthropocentric end of the environmentalist spectrum (Van de Veer & Pierce, 2003).

Leopold (2003), the famous, mid-20th century ecologist, promoted the need for a non-economic, holistic view of ecosystems. Leopold's "land ethic" stated that "a thing is right when it tends to preserve the integrity, stability, and beauty of the biotic community.

It is wrong when it tends otherwise" (p. 223). A basic principle of the land ethic is that it "enlarges the boundaries of the community to include soils, waters, plants, and animals" (p. 216). Leopold's environmental ethic critiqued the conservationist viewpoint for reinforcing human superiority over nature, which excused privileges without supporting ethical obligations. Leopold did not support valuing the land based on "economic motives" (p. 218) because not all of nature has economic value, so the resource viewpoint's protection is limited to only certain parts of the whole (and sometimes it excludes whole ecosystems in and of themselves).

Another more ecocentric perspective, deep ecology, provides an ethical theoretical framework for acknowledging humans' obligations to the non-human world – one that does not place humans at the pinnacle of moral relevance but recognizes the equal moral status of all other life on earth (Devall & Session, 1985). Deep ecology suggests a more holistic and less anthropocentric worldview is necessary to cure the serious environmental problems facing our world. It considers biodiversity inherently valuable and states "humans have no right to reduce this richness and diversity except to satisfy vital needs" (Devall & Session, 1985, p. 67). Deep ecology principles call for humans to immediately moderate their "excessive" (p. 67) interference with the natural world, reduce the human population, and change policies and lifestyles.

Another more ecocentric perspective, Ecological feminism, is defined by Warren (2003) as a framework for "developing an environmental ethic which takes seriously connections between the domination of women and the domination of nature" (p. 282). Warren posited the logic of traditional feminism must include both the abolition of

sexism and naturism, as both are oppressive frameworks characterized by a logic of domination. Ecofeminism foregrounds the dichotomy of gender roles in society, especially as they relate to the dualism of culture/nature: men being historically associated more with human culture and rational beings and women being associated more with nature and emotional/instinctual beings like NHAs (the "lower" beings).

Considering the current ecocentrism versus anthropocentrism debate, Eckersley (1992) categorized all ranges on this spectrum. Eckersley pointed out the commonalities both sides shared, saying they are both emancipatory at heart and critical of the same types of environmentally destructive forces. Where Eckersley claims they vary most is in their "ecophilosophical justifications" (p. 29) for their proposed alternatives. Eckersley's scale of environmental perspectives consists of five ranges, from most anthropocentric to most ecocentric, respectively; they are: resource conservation, human welfare ecology, preservationism, animal liberation, and ecocentrism. When Grendstad and Wollebaek (1998) empirically tested this spectrum to see where people's beliefs ranged, they found that the most anthropocentric perspective, resource conservation, received the lowest support, while human welfare ecology (just one ranking away) had the highest support. The general public seemed to be fairly supportive of all of the middle category perspectives and only failed to agree with the most anthropocentric and most ecocentric "extremes."

While Marangudakis (2001) critiqued ecocentric activism (particularly Earth First! direct action) as radical, unproductive and irrational, other studies confirm Grendstad and Wollebaek's (1998) findings that ecocentric perspectives on nature are not

as radically uncommon or irrational in eyes of the general public – especially not toward wilderness protection (Manning, Valliere, & Minteer, 1999; Steel & Shindler, 1994). In support of ecocentrism, a survey by Hunter and Rinner (2004) revealed that "individuals with ecocentric perspectives place greater priority on species preservation relative to those with anthropocentric perspectives, regardless of species knowledge" (p. 517.) This suggests that a person's environmental *perspective* is more critical to determining species protection than a person's level of *knowledge* or awareness about species and ecological issues. Hunter and Rinner (2004) claimed their survey results imply that education campaigns to protect local species should expand to promote the bigger picture of ecocentric ethics like ecological integrity and biological diversity and that people with anthropocentric views are the key audience to target. This finding bolsters the argument in this dissertation that animal rights campaigns should seek to change the public's anthropocentric perspective on how they perceive and value other animals, addressing the big picture of instrumentalism, rather than primarily seeking to raise factual awareness or simply to change daily behaviors toward NHAs.

Environmental Ethics as it Relates to All Animals – Debates over Individual versus Holistic Perspectives

Most environmental ethics, even more ecocentric ones such as deep ecology and the land ethic, are built on *holistic* perspectives that prioritize the health of the ecosystem or whole species more than the individuals that make up those groups. In contrast, most philosophies supporting ethical treatment of nonhuman and human animals privilege *individual* perspectives, such as rights. While deep ecology acknowledges drastic changes

that humans must make to promote biodiversity, many other environmental philosophies avoid inserting humans into the holistic perspective, as that would reduce humans down to just another species and challenge the current system of individual human rights. This section explores how environmental ethics literature has focused some attention on NHAs and how it might further incorporate a concept of animal ethics.

Sagoff (1993) posited that animal liberation and environmental ethics are incompatible, as environmentalism is not based on a concept of rights. Sagoff did not challenge human rights but argued that if humans extended those individual rights out to all animals then nature would be threatened by the fact that humans become obligated to stop predation in the wild; however, no animal ethics theories make this assertion. Rolston (1993) claimed humans should treat *wild* NHAs *naturally* rather than humanely, but they should treat *domesticated* NHAs *humanely*. The rationale is that a natural concept of ethics is indifferent to individual welfare and suffering and favors only the ability to sustain life. These debates over whether or not to favor individual rights for wild NHAs help explain the major policy conflicts animal activists have with many environmentalists over hunting and killing non-native species (Varner, 1998).

However, some environmental ethics incorporate all animals in a more egalitarian sense. Taylor (1993) took a more Schweitzerian approach to valuing nonhumans by casting a broad net to include all wild plant and animal life. Taylor criticized the notion of human superiority as a bias and asked humans to see themselves ecologically as interdependent species with all others. Humans have a moral obligation to treat other species as inherently valuable members of the biotic community. Taylor (1993)

challenged a holistic environmental ethic by stating that humans, as a destructive species, could not justify their own existence under a holistic perspective.

Excluding the Human Animal from Holistic Ethics

Some philosophers seek to retain a privilege for humans within a holistic ethic. For example, Schmidtz (2002) did not believe in Taylor's (1993) idea of species egalitarianism. Schmidtz (2002) claimed some species have additional virtues, beyond just the telos all living beings share, that grant them higher moral standing. This hierarchical view privileges humans as having the most virtues but acknowledges that other sentient animals have interests that deserve some respect, while plants should be valued more instrumentally.

To defend some individualistic human priorities, Callicott (1993) interpreted Leopold's land ethic as including both holistic and individualistic principles, although acknowledging the former is emphasized. Ecology conceptualized all life existing in a circuit of energy that relies on predation, life, and death. Callicott (1993) admitted that a holistic ethic is threatening to human rights, as it seeks to preserve, "the very inequalities in nature whose social counterparts in human communities are condemned as bad and would be eradicated by familiar social ethics" (p. 125). Callicott acknowledged that Regan (2002) described the anti-human sentiments of holistic environmental ethics as "environmental fascism" (p. 107). However, Callicott (1993) defended the land ethic by claiming that it allowed humans to privilege their moral obligations to human communities in which they were intimate (such as family and nation) while still retaining an obligation to the biotic community.

Additionally, like many other environmental philosophers, Callicott (1993) suggested that humans should respect NHAs while still eating them, as the American Indians did. However, this theory seems to defend the social status quo where humans prioritize human interests over responsibilities to either the natural world or other animals. Callicott implicitly granted the least priority toward NHAs, since they were not perceived as a community of individuals to whom humans were directly obligated but rather as a holistic part of the biotic community.

Biocentric Individualism and the Place of Humans

Varner (1998) promoted a non-holistic environmental perspective by promoting an idea of "biocentric individualism" that helped unify animal and environmental ethics in some ways. By viewing all living organisms as members of the biotic community, humans can grant them each interests that cannot be granted to wholes or groups. Interests are granted to entities based both on their needs and on their ability to have desires and goals, which only certain conscious individuals can have. Varner (1998) compared nature with a business, where it is managed as a whole but for the benefit of the individuals (stockholders and employee wealth).

Although Varner's (1998) ethic privileged conscious, individual animals over individual plants or whole species, Varner admitted to an axiological anthropocentrism that favors some human interests over other conscious animals' interests in times of conflict. Varner does this on the basis that humans' interests contain larger goals than nonhumans' do. This point does not seem biologically relevant, as often the pursuit of human goals uses excess resources, so one can argue that Varner does not convincingly

defend anthropocentrism here. Varner (1998) then pointed to strands of thought in both Regan's and Singer's animal ethics that also privileged human interests and rights when pushed in complex conflicts.

Varner (1998) attempted to show that the major, individualistic animal rights philosophy of Singer may actually overlap with environmentalism, at least on a policy level, by privileging holistic over individual value in some cases. This meant that Singer's utilitarian ethic is "reasonable" enough to allow some therapeutic hunting, for the benefit of the ecosystem, not sport, if it reduces animal suffering overall. Varner described Singer as a welfarist and Regan as a rightist because Regan is less willing to allow individuals to be sacrificed for the benefit of the whole. By mainstreaming and watering down Singer's and Regan's main arguments, Varner claimed to find convergence with holistic environmental ethics, in some cases, and anthropocentrism in others, presumably for the purpose of making animal ethics more amenable to environmental philosophy.

Regan (2002) argued that an individualistic rights perspective is in keeping with environmentalism if extended from animals to include plants. Regan stated that if humans protect individuals in a biotic community, then the whole community benefits. One can perceive of a group as morally valuable but one cannot assign rights to that group. Regan highlighted environmental holism's paradox of wanting to value all life in holistic categories while excluding the human species. These holistic views if applied to human animals would lead to a "fascist" (Regan, 2002, p. 107) type governance that would warrant the killing of any humans deemed ecologically unsustainable.

Clearly, there is a need within environmental ethics to address Regan's (2002) concern that a holistic ethical system would threaten human rights. Varner (1998) was one of the few environmental philosophers who switched to an individual biocentric ethic, while most others reconciled the conflict either by rationalizing humanity's status as a superior being deserving of rights or by ignoring humanity as irrelevant to the separate sphere of nature. It is hard not to notice that even environmental ethics, which is largely based on ecological principles of species interdependence, still separates human society's individual ethical system from nature's holistic ethical system, thereby ironically reinforcing the nature/culture dualism. However, environmentalism does often request that humans adopt a less invasive and destructive lifestyle even if it still grants humans individual rights it denies all other life.

Failure of Environmental Ethics to Address Domesticated Species

Environmental ethics also separates domesticated nonhuman species as being under the purview of human ethics and reserves environmental ethics only for application to *wild* nonhuman species. It therefore categorizes domesticated NHAs, such as farmed animals, as unprotected entities who do not possess the inherent value that wild species and humans do. This apathy toward domesticated nonhumans may be due to the fact that many environmental philosophies do not ask for a transformed conception of *humans* in relation to all other animals but rather ask for a transformed view of *nature*, where humans should value the maintenance of biodiverse ecosystems. However, even this biocentric view of nature as inherently valuable is often based on somewhat instrumental values of human self-interest, since environmental preservation is often promoted as

necessary to ensuring human survival (Freeman, 2005). Therefore, many environmental ethics philosophies, even though some claim to be biocentric, remain more anthropocentric, or humanist, than animal ethics.

But even if animal ethics challenges the human/animal dualism moreso than environmental ethics does, it still reinforces the related culture/nature dualism in some ways, but in a different sense than environmentalists. Animal ethics leaves the realm of wilderness largely to its own governance and only interferes to protect nonhumans from humans when the latter are exercising excessive violence or destruction (beyond basic survival needs). It does not micromanage wilderness the way some environmental perspectives do, and it does not seek to save free animals from the suffering they naturally experience in nature, unless it is caused unnecessarily by humans. Animal ethics does promote guidelines for the treatment of nonhumans where environmental ethics does not – in human society. Here it seeks to grant these nonhumans the status of morally relevant beings, not based on their value to an ecosystem, but based on their value as conscious, sentient subjects of a life, similar to human beings.

Blending Individualism and Holism, Culture and Nature

It seems that neither animal nor environmental ethics can fully escape the bifurcation of human society from nature in all ways, just as humans cannot fully practice just individualism or just holism. Since humans are unwilling and unable to reinsert themselves fully into a natural life as hunter/gatherers who would live more closely under nature's holistic guidelines (in addition to living under some cultural guidelines enforced in any social animal group), I posit that humans have to retain two separate but

sometimes overlapping ethical systems – one for nature and one for human societies. For animal ethics, that means practicing an individual ethic toward all animals in human society and allowing wild nonhuman animals and nature their freedom from dominating human interference (so that humans manage humans, not free nonhumans). For most environmental ethics, that means practicing an individual ethic toward humans in human society while asking humans to avoid domination of nature, and, perhaps ironically, simultaneously managing nature according to a holistic ethic that allows for some nonhuman individuals to be sacrificed for the benefit of the ecosystem (which could be viewed as a form of domination).

Sociologists Jasper and Nelkin (1992) recognized this need to retain some nature/culture divide by stating, "The animal rights movement might be more effective if it embraced the environmentalist perspective on animals in the wild, and focused solely on helping domestic ones" (p. 171). And Pollan's (2006) study of human food dilemmas calls for a bifurcated ethical system, even if a larger advantage is given to humans:

> A human morality based on rights makes for an awkward fit when applied to the natural world. This should come as no surprise: Morality is an artifact of human culture devised to help humans negotiate social relations. It's very good for that. But just as we recognize that nature doesn't provide a very good guide for human social conduct, isn't it anthropocentric of us to assume that our moral system offers an adequate guide for what should happen in nature? Is the individual the crucial moral entity in nature as we've decided it should be in human society? We simply may require a different set of ethics to guide our dealings with the natural

> world, one as well-suited to the particular needs of plants and animals and habitats (where sentience counts for very little) as rights seem to suit us and serve our purposes today. (p. 325)

In conclusion, even in human societies, they blend individual and community/holistic ethical perspectives, albeit often privileging the former in Western societies. So, it is not contradictory that humans do so in their outlook on how to treat other species. While this blending of individual and holistic perspectives does not allow for a neat or simple solution to ethical dilemmas, it does allow for some sense of justice, mainly in avoiding exploitation of other animals and nature, most pertinent to the ethical systems found in both human and nonhuman domains. While they are both anti-instrumental, what may be lacking in both animal and environmental ethics is a less humanist outlook where individual human rights are maintained while humans' animality is embraced and the human/animal dualism more overtly challenged (Freeman, 2007b). This less humanist outlook might increase our kinship with other animals and begin to privilege nature as a moral and inherently valuable domain that is not entirely separate from or "below" human society.

The next section explores how animal and environmental ethics have translated into activism on behalf of nonhumans in the United States, including where animal activism has overlapped with environmental activism historically. This animal activism section will be followed by a section that returns to moral philosophy, narrowing the discussion to the development of ethical perspectives on eating other animals.

History of Activism for Nonhuman Animals in the United States

This section examines the origins and development of the NHA protection movement in the United States. To give a perspective on the rapid development of the humane movement, between its origins in the mid 19th century and the turn of the 20th century, about 700 animal protection organizations formed in United States, mainly ASPCA chapters. And after Singer's 1975 book, *Animal Liberation*, the movement experienced a growth spurt, and now it is estimated that 7,000 organizations exist with over 10 million members (Beers, 2006, p. 3).

The Humane Movement Leading to Animal Rights

England pioneered the Western humane movement in the early 19th century with Richard Martin's founding of the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (SPCA), which was formed to enforce new anti-cruelty laws protecting farmed animals. Beers (2006), a historian, credited the SPCA's formation to the social problems caused by industrialization as well as inspiration from new philosophies on kinship related to the abolition movement and Darwinian evolutionary theory. In the United States in the mid to late 19th century, industrialization presented people with a conflict between their desire to consume nature and to save it, as influenced by Thoreau's back to nature movement.

Henry Bergh created the American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (ASPCA) in 1866, and his first conviction was a butcher who had mistreated farmed animals (Beers, 2006). Early ASPCA campaigns sought to improve the conditions for working carriage horses and farmed animals in the slaughterhouse as well as to stop hunting and animal experimentation. While some states did pass anti-cruelty laws earlier

in the 19th century, the nation did not have a federal anti-cruelty statute until 1871 when it passed the "twenty-eight hour law" to improve the welfare of farmed animals transported by rail to slaughter. But protecting "livestock" drew less public support than protecting companion animals, so animal shelter and rescue work started to dominate the humane movement in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Post World War One (WWI) did see other campaigns such as those against fur and circuses (Beers, 2006). The post World War Two (WWII) years saw a growth in professional welfare organizations like the Humane Society of the United States, Friends of Animals, and the Animal Welfare Institute, who focused on changing institutions not just individuals (Jasper & Nelkin, 1992).

There were divisions within the animal protection movement, however. The American Humane Association (AHA), formed in 1877 to unify the movement, ironically caused a rift between radical and conservative activists in the late 19th century, as it took a conservative welfare stance of working with industries like the meat industry (Beers, 2006). More militant activists left and formed their own rights groups, such as the American Anti-Vivisection Association started by Caroline Earle White. By the post WWII era, even other welfare groups, such as the Humane Society of the United States (HSUS), campaigned for more stringent humane reforms in slaughterhouses, as the HSUS considered the AHA's slaughterhouse monitoring to be too weak. Welfare organizations sometimes used rights language but ultimately they took an instrumentalist view that weighed human interests higher than the interests of other animals and did not promote species equality. Welfarists and rightists argued over language in reform bills,

but the welfarists won and passed the Humane Slaughter Act in 1958 and the Laboratory Animal Welfare Act in 1966 and 1970. The animal protection movement was largely dominated by welfare groups until the mid 1970s (Beers, 2006).

In its origins, the animal protection movement borrowed activist strategies from the abolitionist and women's rights movements, such as using moral suasion to expose the reality of injustices (Beers, 2006). Since animal activists believed people were not willing to give up their superior status over other animals, the early movement leaders often used an anthropocentric approach and attached humane reform to human self-interest. For example, the humane slaughter act was also touted as a public health reform. Many organizations, especially the ASPCA under Bergh's leadership, attracted media attention by staging protests and using shocking visual images of cruelty. Beers (2006) claimed that newspapers covering the emerging movement in the late 19th century often ridiculed activists, particularly Bergh, as sentimentalists, but the news of that century eventually did show some moral outrage and sometimes compared human and NHA slavery.

The modern day animal protection movement was inspired by Singer's (1990) book *Animal Liberation,* which was originally published in 1975 (Jasper & Nelkin, 1992). In the 1970s, activist Henry Spira individually led animal rights campaigns, but by the 1980's, national animal rights groups formed, such as People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals, In Defense of Animals, the Animal Liberation Front, and the Animal Legal Defense Fund, all of which are still active today. By the end of the 1980s, there were several hundred animal rights groups and several thousand welfare groups,

mainly local humane societies. Membership in national groups rose drastically in the 1980s – mainly from educated, city-dwelling, non-religious women who had companion animals (Jasper & Nelkin, 1992).

The animal protection movement of the late 20th century drew from the ideologies of the feminist and environmental movements to critique instrumentalism, the institutionally-sanctioned exploitation of others as a means to an end (Jasper & Nelkin, 1992). The anti-instrumentalism of the New Left questioned capitalism's growth imperative and its emphasis on the material instead of the moral. Rights rhetoric burgeoned in many movements in the 1970s, including animal rights. Jasper and Nelkin (1992) claimed the animal rights fundamentalists were more successful than welfarists at attracting members and formulating issues because they used strong visuals and moral language that was more dramatic and energizing. However, the authors critiqued the fundamentalists' message as too polarizing due to a demonization of opponents as enemies.

The moral language of rights has radicalized the animal protection movement in a matter of a few decades (Jasper & Nelkin, 1992). Jasper and Nelkin explained:

> Their leaders have linked philosophical arguments about the exploitation of animals to prevailing social concerns: the mistrust of science and medicine, the disaffection with big business and commodity culture, the disillusionment with bureaucracy and expertise, and the resistance to domination so important in feminist critiques. (p. 170)

History of Animal Protection and Environmental Movement Alliances

Animal protection and environmentalism do overlap, particularly in the protection of wild, or free, NHAs and their habitats. The main conflict in wildlife protection is over hunting of NHAs (Beers, 2006; Varner, 1998). Even if some naturists, such as Muir and Seton, objected to unethical hunting practices, many naturists kept anti-hunting views to themselves to avoid offending and losing the many hunting members in their environmental groups. Early environmentalists often had more instrumental views of conserving nature, which did not lead to many alliances with animal advocates. The first significant alliance was a successful campaign at the turn of the 20th century to save birds from extinction due to the ladies fashion trend of feathered hats (Beers, 2006).

Post WWII, the environmental movement had become less anthropocentric, but biocentrism still did not fit ideologically with an animal protection movement built largely on preventing suffering. However, Jasper and Nelkin (1992) claimed the environmental movement's anti-capitalist, anti-instrumentalist ideology and its high-risk strategies, such as those by Greenpeace, were influential to the emerging animal rights movement. Beers (2006) believed that Carson, a popular environmental author, was able to bridge the two movements in the mid to late 20th century, as Carson was influenced by Schweitzer's broad reverence for life. The two movements did work together to pass two significant wildlife protection measures – the Endangered Species Act (1969 and 1973) and the Marine Mammal Protection Act (1972).

Hunting remains a point of contention, as most environmentalists still will not alienate members by having anti-hunting or anti-fur campaigns (Jasper & Nelkin, 1992).

Maurer (2002) and Varner (1998) suggested similar pragmatic motivations regarding the environmental movement's current reticence to actively promote sustainable plant-based diets or campaign against destructive factory farms, both out of fear of alienating members and a desire to avoid having their identity conflated with animal rights, a less popular ideology. Animal activists often consider themselves environmentalists, but the reverse is less often true. Beers (2006) explained, "Humanitarians more easily conflated biocentric concerns with issues of animal sentience; they could envision all animals and one animal, perceiving the interests of both as an interrelated cause" (p. 195). Many animal protection authors suggested greater alliances with the environmental movement would be advantageous (Beers, 2006; Hall, 2006; Jasper & Nelkin, 1992; Maurer, 2002), but to do so animal protection ideology would have to put greater emphasis on the aspects that overlap with environmental ideology.

Beers (2006) suggested the ideological difference between environmentalism and animal rights is also gender-based. The humane movement has a reputation of being run by sentimentalists and females, which associates it with emotion. The environmental movement has a reputation of being male-dominated and scientific, which associates it with reason. This gives environmentalism the advantage of being on the dominant side of the male/female and reason/emotion dualisms. Jasper and Nelkin (1992) described this as environmentalism historically appealing to the brain and the humane movement appealing to the heart. Although, the modern animal ethics philosophies of Regan (1983) and Singer (1990) add a reasoned appeal for "masculine" notions of rights and justice that welfare philosophies based on compassion do not possess.

The final section of this chapter narrows the discussion of animal issues down to the focus of this dissertation – animals used for human food. This section will explore the historical development of Western thought on the ethics of eating other animals for food, particularly pro-vegetarian perspectives, as they help inform the ARO food campaigns studied in this dissertation. This section includes an exploration of the communication challenges facing AROs due to the discomfort that the public and animal agribusiness have with honestly and candidness in discussing these ethical issues and facing the reality of how NHAs are raised. The section concludes with a brief overview of the status of vegetarianism in the United States today.

Western Vegetarian Ethics Throughout the Ages

In opening their book *Ethical Vegetarianism: from Pythagoras to Peter Singer*, editors Walters and Portmess (1999) situated the specific ethical dilemma of eating other animals within the broader ethical debate of nature versus culture. The editors questioned whether human's purpose was to amend nature or to follow it, how humans should view predator and prey relationships and determine which one they are, and how humans should reconcile the fact that some suffering and death is necessary to bring about a renewal of life.

Throughout history, all pro-vegetarian writers have shown a concern for the suffering that humans cause other animals, specifically suffering that is deemed unnecessary (Walters & Portmess, 1999). Writers often asked humans to stop repressing their pity and to bear witness to the horrors of the slaughterhouse. While writers from previous eras focused more on questions of moral purity and how to lead a good life,

contemporary writers added to this a deconstruction of the human/animal dualism, arguing that there is not a morally-relevant difference between all animals. I note the authors' themes of ethicality are often based on avoiding unnecessary harm and showing restraint from excess, which aligns with my earlier discussion of how humans' propensity for excess requires a sophisticated ethical system.

Antiquity

Ancient writers often acknowledged a kinship between humans and other animals, allowing nonhumans the capacities of reason and emotion that scientific thought of later centuries would deny them (Walters & Portmess, 1999). Writers of this era often stated how the killing of animals for food is unjust because it is unnecessary. They also worried that human cruelty toward other animals desensitized people toward cruelty to humans. Pythagoras (570-490 BCE) was perhaps the most famous vegetarian, and, in fact, Western vegetarians up through the 18th century were often called *Pythagoreans*. His motivation for vegetarianism was based on a belief in the transmigration of souls between human and nonhuman animals. Ovid's writings on Pythagoras's teachings were quite passionate, including terms such as *bloodshed, flesh, evil, wicked,* and *greedy*. The fact that plant foods require no bloodshed makes them a "gentler nourishment" (in Walters & Portmess, 1999, p. 22). Pythagoras argued that killing is only appropriate when necessary for self-defense but not for food.

Plutarch (56-120) alluded to evolutionary kinship by recognizing that nature gave all animals similar characteristics, and he said that the sentience and intelligence of other animals deserved moral consideration (Walters & Portmess, 1999). Plutarch's description

of cruel farming methods that were practiced to improve the taste of the flesh suggests that there has not been a time when farming of animals was humane. He claimed flesh-eating is unnatural to humans who must cook it to deceive the palate from the "taste of gore" (in Walters & Portmess, 1999, p. 29). For Plutarch, vegetarianism equaled humanitarianism and "social responsibility" because eating flesh "makes us spiritually coarse and gross by reason of satiety and surfeit" (in Walters & Portmess, 1999, p. 30). To emphasize his concern that our killing was excessive, Plutarch said we humans should only eat flesh to satisfy hunger not luxury.

Porphyry (233-309) also claimed it is unjust to injure anyone for "luxury" (in Walters & Portmess, 1999, p. 41) and not just subsistence, as justice is aligned with self-control and abstinence. "Since justice consists in not injuring any thing, it must be extended as far as to every animated nature" (in Walters & Portmess, 1999, p. 45). There are several similarities between Porphyry's views and the views of Singer (1990) millennia later in privileging sentience as a trait all animals possess that morally separates animals from plants. Additionally, Porphyry believed that NHAs are rational beings and noted the inconsistency that humans extended justice out to some humans who are not as rational as some NHAs. The four reasons Porphyry gave for vegetarianism were (1) animals are rational, (2) humans are inflicting needless suffering and death on NHAs, (3) humans' craving for meat is based in pleasure not necessity, and (4) ill treatment of NHAs encourages unjust treatment of humans (Walters & Portmess, 1999).

From Ancient Times to the 19th Century

Walters and Portmess (1999) noted that Christianity's reign hindered vegetarianism, as the Christian faith relied on the separation of humans and other animals. There were few vegetarian writings between ancient times and the 18th century. An exception was Leonardo DaVinci (1452-1519), a devout ethical vegetarian of the Renaissance, who bravely refused meat at royal banquets (Berry, 1995). Of DaVinci's few writings on the subject, he said, "I have from an early age abjured the use of meat, and the time will come when men such as I will look upon the murder of animals as they now look upon the murder of men" (in Wynne-Tyson, 1990, p. 103). Vegetarian writings in the 18th century were often spawned in resistance to Cartesianism (Walters & Portmess, 1999). For example, vegetarian Bernard Mandeville (1670-1733) believed mere observation of animals' pain and suffering clearly refuted Descartes' logic. Other writings of the 18th century, such as those by utilitarian David Hartley, often emphasized the anthropocentric idea that flesh-eating does not lead to a virtuous character.

Nineteenth century authors were often anthropocentric, but they showed an increasing concern for sentience by including vivid descriptions of slaughterhouse violence (Walters & Portmess, 1999). Some writings have a tone of pity for other animals as weak victims on whom humans should bestow charity. Poet Alphonse De Lamartine (1790-1869) described vegetarianism in feminine terms such as *pure* and *gentle,* as vegetarianism represented having a soft or ideal heart. Physician William Alcott (1789-1859) also mentioned femininity by arguing that women are sensitive and shun violence and bloodshed, and it would benefit men's moral sensibilities to follow suit and not

suppress their natural tendencies against killing. Alcott believed the ethical argument is even more persuasive than scientific arguments for vegetarianism. He also proposed a sustainability argument, novel for the time, regarding the inefficiency of using land to grow animals and not plants. But his argument was motivated by anthropocentrism more so than environmentalism, as it claimed vegetarianism would allow more humans to exist.

German composer and anti-vivisectionist Richard Wagner (1813-1883) emphasized sentience in other animals and was highly critical and less sympathetic of humans because they caused so much animal suffering (Walters & Portmess, 1999). He said humans were addicted to pleasure but that joy should come only from refraining from causing anyone intentional pain. Novelist Leo Tolstoy (1828-1910) emphasized restraint through vegetarianism as a moral aspiration and first step to a virtuous life. Like Alcott, Tolstoy believed humans naturally sympathized with other living beings, but it was culture and blindness to custom that repressed those sympathies. Because meat-eating is unnecessary, Tolstoy blamed humans' habit of killing on social excuses related to religion, example, habit, and greed. Tolstoy acknowledged the cognitive dissonance of many meat-eaters in avoiding the horrors of the slaughterhouse, "when what we do not wish to see is what we wish to eat" (in Walters & Portmess, 1999, p. 104).

Pioneering physician Anna Kingsford (1846-1888) took a pacifist and humanitarian approach to vegetarian advocacy (Walters & Portmess, 1999). She placed the nobility of humans above other animals by saying we should ideally lead a gentle life and not act like beasts of prey. She said humans should take pity on and show charity

toward domesticated nonhumans. But she was also critical of humans by arguing that eating meat makes them uncivilized, as humans sacrifice civility and peace for "comfort, luxury, indulgence, and ease" (in Walters & Portmess, 1999, p. 108). Kingsford believed vegetarianism should be the foundation of all peace and justice movements:

> I always feel that such of these as are not abstainers from flesh-food have unstable ground under their feet, and it is my great regret that, when helping them in their good works, I cannot openly and publicly maintain what I so ardently believe – that the Vegetarian movement is the bottom and basis of all other movements towards Purity, Freedom, Justice, and Happiness. (in Walters & Portmess, 1999, p. 108)

20th Century

Twentieth century pro-vegetarian writings expanded on all previous notions of kinship, sympathy, and a virtuous character to include animal rights, environmentalism, and feminism (Walters & Portmess, 1999). Perhaps the most ardent vegetarian and animal rights spokesperson of the turn of the century was British teacher and social reformer Henry Salt (1851-1939). In his Humanitarian League memoir *Seventy Years among Savages* (1921), he challenged the notion of the English calling themselves *civilized* while practicing needless violence toward nature and human and nonhuman animals. Salt recognized that some animals and insects were killed in harvesting plant crops, but he distinguished between this harm being a necessity and the raising of animals for slaughter being unnecessary. Like Tolstoy and Kingsford, Salt spoke of vegetarianism as foundational to a virtuous life (Walters & Portmess, 1999).

While Salt believed in the health benefits of vegetarianism, offering the working class populations as evidence, he argued that a humane motive should be the chief reason to go vegetarian, "as the moral basis of vegetarianism is the one that sustains the rest" (in Walters & Portmess, 1999, p. 124) and creates a lasting commitment. Mohandas Gandhi (1869-1948) echoed Salt's assessment that vegetarianism should be motivated by morality, both to increase personal satisfaction and sustained commitment and to improve one's spiritual faculties:

> I found that a selfish basis would not serve the purpose of taking a [man] higher and higher along the paths of evolution. What was required was an altruistic purpose. I found also that health was by no means the monopoly of vegetarians. (in Walters & Portmess, 1999, p. 142)

Regan (1975), the contemporary animal ethicist, emphasized that humans should specifically avoid *killing* animals, not just causing pain. Regan stated it did not matter if humans killed a nonhuman on an idyllic farm, on a factory farm, or in the woods, it was morally inconsistent to take away his/her life when one would not have taken the life of a human. This view relied on Regan's belief that there is no morally relevant aspect of humanity that separates them from other beings with a conscious interest in living. Since killing is to be avoided, Regan (2003) contended that the "total abolition of commercial animal agriculture" (p. 1) is a goal of the animal rights movement. Similarly, Singer (1990) argued that animal agribusiness, whether free range or intensive, is a speciesist practice because it controls and sacrifices the lives of farmed animals (major interests for the nonhuman animals) to satisfy humans' taste for flesh, milk, and eggs (minor interests

for the human animals). Considering the fact that humans can healthfully live on a plant-based diet, a fact supported by the American Dietetic Association (ADA, 2003), Singer (1990) asserted that humans should make it a "simple general principle to avoid killing animals for food except when it is necessary for survival" (p. 229). Another philosopher, S. Clark, also emphasized that since flesh-eating is largely unnecessary, it is morally untenable. Clark argued that it is hypocritical for philosophers to claim they are against unnecessary suffering, yet allow for it in diet, stating "those who still eat flesh when they could do otherwise have no claim to be serious moralists" (in Walters & Portmess, 1999, p. 207).

Meat, masculinity, and patriarchy. Adams (1990) provided an ecofeminist perspective on promoting vegetarianism. Adams connected patriarchy with the unjust domination of human women and nonhumans who are farmed and hunted. Adams (1990) asserted, "women and animals are similarly positioned in a patriarchal world, as objects rather than subjects" (p 168). Women and farmed animals both endure a "cycle of objectification, fragmentation, and consumption" (p. 47). Farmed animals enter this cycle by being enslaved, butchered, dismembered, and consumed. Their body parts are sold in packages at the store quite fragmented and removed in appearance from the living, feeling creatures they once were. Adams (1990) concluded that "eating animals acts as a mirror and representation of patriarchal values. Meat-eating is the reinscription of male power at every meal" (p. 187).

The sexist and speciesist connection between meat and masculinity has historical roots. In the book *Beyond Beef*, Rifkin (1992) traced this connection between meat and

masculinity back to ancient Egypt where the first universal religion was bull worship, based on the bull God, Apis, who represented strength, virility, and a masculine passion for war and subjugation. To mark the year's end, the Apis bull would be ritually sacrificed and fed to the king so he could incorporate the bull's fierce strength and power. More recently, in American culture, cowboys tamed the "Wild West" and turned it into a vast cattle grazing area, forever associating red meat with this brave and tough category of American men (Rifkin, 1992). Adams (1990) highlighted men's traditional role in hunting animals and its perceived value in society, "Meat was a valuable economic commodity; those who controlled this commodity achieved power" (p. 34). Adams referenced several anthropologists, such as Leakey, Lewin, and Sanday, who found that women's status was lower in societies where meat was important. When economies relied on plant food, women held more status, and the society tended to be egalitarian (Adams, 1990).

Naturalness arguments regarding predation and agriculture. Adams claimed Western society maintains a social construction of humans as a natural predator and obligate omnivore so the necessity of our flesh-eating habit is not questioned (in Walters & Portmess, 1999). Under the omnivorous paradigm, vegetarianism is erroneously made to seem a naïve and feminized position that is ignorant of the laws of nature and anatomy. For example, Pollan (2006) accused vegetarian advocates of showing contempt for nature and predation, ironically demonstrating vegetarians' discomfort with acknowledging human's position as an animal. While it is true that many animal activists, along with many other people operating under human ethical guidelines, are uncomfortable

witnessing or partaking in the suffering and violence of predation, that does not necessarily mean that they do not understand the need for predation in nature or that they fail to embrace humans' animality in other ways. Humans can choose to define themselves largely as herbivorous great apes. Mason (1993) cited anthropological theories that proposed for the first 25,000 years of Homo sapiens existence, prior to hunting and agriculture, they were largely herbivorous, as is natural to great apes. As Homo sapiens have migrated into ecosystems that do not provide adequate plant protein, they have the ability to become more omnivorous if necessary for adaptation (Mason, 1993). So while human history reveals both periods of greater herbivorousness and of greater omnivorousness, what is certainly unnatural is the vast consumption of animal products that has come to symbolize the normal American diet of the last half century.

In opposition to Pollan's (2006) assertion that vegetarians fail to embrace their animality, Wood (2004) argued that humans consume other animals to demonstrate control over the animal within them. Humans may surmise that the external animals they eat stand for the internal animal they must overcome. Wood (2004) contended that humans use meat-eating to continually reassure themselves of their powerful position in nature: "Might not the legitimacy of meat-eating rest, albeit precariously, not on our clear superiority to 'the animal' but on our need to demonstrate this over and over again?" (p. 138). Similarly, Hall (2006) theorized that the root of humans' domination over other animals lies in their insecurity over humans' history as a prey animal. Hall claimed humans are ambivalent about letting go of their instrumental attitudes, even today,

because these attitudes are historically linked to the self-preservation achieved in making themselves the predator instead of the prey.

Most who claim meat-eating is natural for the human animal fail to address how unnatural it is for any animal to breed and enslave others as a food source via agriculture. This implies that the human practice of hunting wild animals, a practice approximately 20,000 years old (Mason, 1993), is more ethical under natural standards of predation than is agriculture, the latter being a more cultural domain. While agriculture might be largely unnatural to the animal kingdom, one could argue that it is part of a natural evolution for humans in symbiotic alliance with certain other animals (Pollan, 2006). But even within human history, domestication of other animals for agriculture is a newer practice for the human species, originating approximately only 11,000 years ago (Mason, 1993). I contend that agriculture is less indicative of natural evolutionary adaptation and more a site of evolutionary role reversal, when the human species started to dominate and adapt nature to fit its own needs. Agriculture and other dominating practices allow humans to flourish but often in ecologically unsustainable ways (Singer & Mason, 2006).

Utilitarian arguments regarding reducing the most deaths and suffering. Even plant-based agriculture causes NHAs to suffer and die by displacing wildlife and frequently killing some field animals in harvesting. However, because foraging would not sustain the human population at this point, plant-based agriculture is still largely required, and because a vegan diet is more sustainable and efficient at feeding people, veganism requires less land and kills fewer field animals than the current animal-laden diet (Singer & Mason, 2006). Davis (2003), an animal scientist, argued that it would be more humane

for humans to eat grass-fed cows than to eat only plants, as that beef diet would actually cause the least NHAs to die. However, Matheny (2003) refuted the validity of Davis's findings based on a miscalculation Davis made by assuming an acre of land could feed the same amount of people, when a vegetarian diet could feed ten times as many. Therefore, Matheny calculated that a vegan diet kills one fifth as many NHAs as a diet based on grass-fed cows. Because a deontological ethic considers motivation in addition to actions themselves, I argue that it is less of an ethical breach to inadvertently kill a number of wild NHAs indirectly in necessary plant agriculture (although, ideally the goal would be to develop harvesting practices that kill no one) than it is to continue to legislate the intentional yet unnecessary breeding, captivity, and slaughtering of other animals (such as cows fed on grass). Animal agriculture in any form facilitates an instrumental worldview that supports the subjugation of other animals, reducing them to just a means to an end.

Some authors (Pollan, 2006; Sagoff, 1993) made the utilitarian argument that NHAs have a better life and a less painful death living on a free-range farm than living in the wild. This argument is specious for a variety of reasons. First, it assumes that NHAs would willingly trade their lives and their freedom for the short-lived "security" of a captive existence prior to a guaranteed, premature slaughter by a human predator. Second, it implies that farmers save each domesticated NHA from an unsafe life in the wild, when the farmers actually create those NHA lives and, thus, are responsible for additional deaths. Plus, one of the ways farmers protect their "livestock" from nonhuman predators is to have the USDA Wildlife Services division kill tens of thousands of wild

predators annually (Mason & Singer, 2006). Third, it suggests that all animal activists naively want these domesticated animals to be set free in the wild, where they are ill-equipped (due to years of selective breeding for heavy meat, milk and egg production) to adequately take care of themselves and escape predators. Animal rights scholars (Hall, 2006; Regan, 2003) admit that ideally humans would not subjugate any NHAs by domesticating them into a life of forced captivity and dependence; however, these scholars do not suggest that existing domesticated farmed animals simply be set free, as that would be irresponsible and likely cause increased suffering. They simply suggest that we humans discontinue breeding other animals for our own purposes.

Eating as subject to both natural and cultural ethical guidelines. While Rolston (1993) defined eating animals as a natural event that is subject to the laws of nature, not a cultural event subject to human ethics, I believe the variety of perspectives on the issue, as explored in this section, reveal eating is both natural and cultural. This reiterates my earlier contention that the bifurcation of nature/culture is somewhat necessary in determining ethical actions that affect both domains. I believe if the eating of others becomes necessary for the survival of a human in a certain place or situation, then flesh-eating, especially through low-tech hunting, becomes more justifiable under the guidelines of nature, as human ethics require that the moral agent be in a position to make a choice from free will. Therefore, when one has a choice about what one can eat, eating becomes more cultural and subject to human ethical systems, which makes the choice to kill or exploit another animal for his/her body parts, in this common situation, morally untenable.

Because the ethicality of the human practice of raising and eating other animals has been debated since Ancient times, it is perhaps not surprising that many meat-eaters are uncomfortable discussing farmed animal welfare and animal rights. Animal agribusiness capitalizes on this discomfort by communicating to the public using ambiguous discourse that largely hide the problems with animal production and seeks to increase its perceived ethicality, thereby reducing any consumer guilt.

The need for deception in communicating about meat-eating. In order to sustain the industrialized violence against nonhumans, such as in factory farming, Derrida (2002) admitted it is necessary for humans to "organize on a global scale the forgetting or misunderstanding of this violence" (p. 394). Animal agribusiness orchestrates this forgetting with consumers' implicit permission. Both Pollan (2006) and Singer and Mason (2006) discussed the difficulties they faced in trying to gain access to large animal farms for purposes of research for their books. Singer & Mason (2006) noted that the media are often denied access, particularly with cameras, as agribusiness is resistant to allow any visual evidence of its practices to reach the public. Pollan (2006) observed, "the meat industry understands that the more people know about what happens on the kill floor, the less meat they're likely to eat" (p. 304) as the conditions are "nightmarish" (p. 318). In fact, Cheeke (2004), an agricultural professor, admitted that it is an ethical situation for animal agriculture to purposely hide its industrial practices out of shame or fear that consumers will go vegetarian if they were to see the poor welfare conditions. This explains why many pro-vegetarian authors since the eighteenth century felt the need to vividly describe the cruelties of the slaughterhouse in an attempt to raise the public's

awareness of the cruelty behind closed doors. Pollan (2006) concluded that all industrial agribusiness and its consumers participate in a "journey of forgetting that could hardly be more costly, not only in terms of the animal's pain but in our pleasure too. But forgetting, or not knowing the first place, is what the industrial food chain is all about" (p. 10).

Most animal products, especially meat, are packaged with little information about the production conditions, facilitating no communication between farmer and consumer. Pollan (2006) found it ironic that consumers purchase food, something so fundamental to their health, based mainly on price. Pollan posited that ignorance and cheapness are mutually reinforcing at keeping consumers apathetic to production issues and quality. But Pollan noted a new trend in marketing animal products, such as cage-free or free-range, that includes explanations of improved animal welfare and wholesomeness. Pollan (2006) described the stories on the product packages as a new literary genre called "supermarket pastoral" (p. 137). In the case of Petaluma's "Rosie, the organic free-range chicken," Pollan described the marketing as fraudulent because, during a visit, the author did not find the chickens roaming free and could not locate the idyllic pasture pictured on the label.

As Pollan (2006) and Singer and Mason (2006) noted, these new marketing stories rarely represent authentic communication about actual farm conditions but rather construct idealized visions of the kind of wholesomeness that consumers desire from farming. It is just a newer tactic in the meat industry's history of using euphemisms to disguise unappealing or harsh practices (Adams, 1990; Dunayer, 2001; Glenn, 2004). For example, industry and government officials refer to animals using marketing or

commodified terms, such as *beef* instead of *cow flesh*, and *grain-and roughage-consuming units* or *inventory* instead of *animals* (Glenn, 2004). Adams (1990) noted how terminology describing meat objectifies NHAs and is purposely constructed via absent referents that allow consumers to distance themselves from their accountability in killing a living being. Describing the term *meat,* Adams stated, "something we do to animals has become instead something that is a part of animals' nature, and we lose consideration of our role entirely" (in Walters & Portmess, 1999, p. 251). Through analysis of advertising and media images, Adams (2003) exposed the hegemonic nature of patriarchy as an insidious force in American culture that allows inequality, like that toward farmed animals, to virtually "disappear as a privilege and is experienced as 'desire,' as 'appetite,' as 'pleasure'" (p. 171).

The public is complicit in the use of euphemisms to hide the unpleasantness of farmed animal slaughter, as Westerners seem to require self-deception regarding their unjust treatment of other animals in order to maintain their self-image as a civilized society. Salt (1921) believed that euphemisms were an impediment to becoming a nonviolent society:

> The distinction between savagery and civilization is a matter of names… to use flattering titles as a veil for cruel practices gives permanence to evils that otherwise would not be permitted. Our present self-satisfaction in what we are pleased to call our civilization is a very serious obstacle to improvement. (p. 239)

This sentiment is echoed by Derrida's (2004) prediction that industrialized violence against animals will have to change as it increasingly becomes a "spectacle" (p. 71),

forcing humans to decide they cannot face the negative image this abuse creates of *themselves*. Besides the lack of public awareness about modern farming, the largest impediment to Derrida's prediction coming true is, perhaps, the continued restriction of meat discourse to the realm of farmed animal *welfare* instead of veganism and the rights of animals not to be farmed and killed (Freeman, in press; Irvin, 2007).

American attitudes toward farmed animals today. Americans are almost evenly split in their concern for farmed animal welfare. A U.S. telephone poll (Zogby, 2003) of more than 1,000 likely voters in 2003 revealed that 52% express concern about the treatment of farm animals, when asked, while 45% are unconcerned. At the extreme ends of these figures, 16% of those respondents said they are "*very* concerned," while a larger number, 29%, are "*not at all* concerned." Yet, over 80% believe it is right to have, or there should be, laws to protect farmed animals from "cruelty and abuse" (p. 6).

When it comes to understanding farmed animal welfare laws, approximately two-thirds of the population is unaware that farmed animals lack basic legal protection in the United States, with over one third of those mistakenly believing that state and federal anti-cruelty laws and the federal Animal Welfare Act ensure farmed animal welfare (Zogby, 2003). This public misunderstanding about farmed animal protection may account for the fact that over 70% of people polled believe farmed animals are "fairly treated" (p. 6) in the United States. Attitudes did vary based on certain demographic categories:

> In general, throughout the survey, Democrats, women, singles, Easterners, and those who are middle-aged and at middle income levels, are more likely to

> support welfare or protectionist legislation than Republicans, those under thirty, rural respondents, Westerners, married people, those with higher incomes, and men. (p. 5)

The last subsection of this chapter expands on current U.S. practices as it provides a brief overview of the status of vegetarianism in the United States today.

Vegetarianism in the United States

In the book *Vegetarianism: Movement or Moment?* (2002), Maurer examined the history of vegetarianism as a movement in the United States, claiming that vegetarianism peaked in the mid-1800s and again in the 1960s and 1970s (Maurer, 2002). Ever since, vegetarianism has held a small but steady contingency without growing significantly. In spite of the animal rights and vegetarian movements, Americans' per capita consumption of meat went up between the 1970s and the 1990s, with price and health being determining factors in which type of animal is consumed in the largest quantities.

While approximately 7% of the American population self-identifies as vegetarian on surveys, millions of these people do eat some meat, as so-called "semi-vegetarianism" or "flexitarianism" is gaining popularity. The percent of the population who is *actually* vegetarian, eating no animal flesh, is likely between 2 and 3%. About 1% of these people, or approximately a million people, are vegan and eat no animal products whatsoever (Maurer, 2002; Singer & Mason, 2006). The typical person attracted to vegetarianism is a young, white, middle-class, atheist female (Maurer, 2002).

Maurer (2002) cited Visser, a cultural historian, who suggested that "vegetarianism can be viewed as a modern response to dealing with the endless choices

engendered by a consumer society that discourages the appearance of overconsumption" (p. 138). But the main reasons people *say* they go vegetarian is for health and/or ethics, with environmental sustainability being another popular motivation (Maurer, 2006). People who go vegetarian for ethical reasons tend to be more committed to remaining vegetarian. So, Maurer (2006) posited, "promoting concern for animals and the environment is essential to the advancement of the vegetarian movement" (p. 45) because health-motivated vegetarians may be tempted by the convenience of a meat-based diet and new lower-fat meat items. Additionally, so-called "humane" or "happy" meats are becoming more popular with consumers and former vegetarians, despite the fact that the NHAs on these farms often still endure suffering and slaughter (Pollan, 2006; Singer & Mason, 2006).

Summary and Conclusion

Summary

History of Western thought on other animals. Western society has come back to a debate that is over 2,000 years old, the "original Greek appraisal of the worth of other animals" (Cavalieri, 2006, p. 66). Society is moving beyond the limited arguments of the post-Cartesian era regarding cruelty and pleas for more compassion and is challenging the idea that NHAs should be enslaved. For the first time in history, using philosophical means, "it is now possible to defend the idea that animal lives have value" (p. 66).

Poststructural and posthumanist philosophies regarding the false human/animal dualism. The false human/animal binary must be deconstructed, as it is at the root of Western philosophy's justification for its discrimination against NHAs. There is an

inability to neatly define the human border that separates humans from all other animals, at least not in a morally relevant way. Species is more about categorizing variety - differences of degree not kind. Species categories are based more on biological or physical traits, yet humans tend to use *mental* traits for determining who has moral relevancy. For example Singer (1990) claimed that sentience was the true moral distinguishing factor in human society, and Regan (2003) proposed the key factor was being a conscious subject of a life. Most animal species possess sentience and consciousness that warrant their being considered morally valuable individuals.

A major philosophical conflict in animal rights is that the very idea that humans should treat nonhumans better and be "humane" may, ironically, be humanist; it may privilege humans with a certain ethical status presumably not found in other animals or nature. Human's ethical system may be highly complex when compared to that of other animals, but this high level of sophistication appears to be necessary to restrain our special propensity for excessive harm. I argue that the one trait that does seem to distinguish the human species among most other animal species is our ability to do most things (both "good" and "bad") to *excess* of what is natural or needed.

And nature is not necessarily immoral in comparison to culture, as nature has its own principles that promote moderation and cooperation, especially among social animals. Therefore, when AROs promote animal rights on ethical grounds, they should take care not to insinuate that ethical principles are limited to the realm of humanity or are "humane," as that might unintentionally reinforce the problematic human/animal

dualism and related notions of human superiority that lead to discrimination against NHAs.

Besides the notion of being "humane," humanism is arguably also apparent to some degree in Singer's (1990) and Regan's (1983) theories that use a *shared* trait between human and nonhuman animals, such as sentience and consciousness, as a reason to include NHAs in our sphere of moral concern. However, before chastising animal rights for implicitly promoting humanism, one must determine whether the activist's line of argumentation is based more on the desire to *build nonhumans up* in the "noble" likeness of humanity or based more on the desire to *knock humans down* off their self-constructed moral pedestal, encouraging them to embrace, instead of shun, their innate animality. The latter approach of asking humans to embrace their own animality and begin to respect the body's wisdom, instead of always privileging human rationality, is perhaps a more philosophically rigorous approach to promoting animal rights, but it is not as pragmatic as the more humanist approach of proving NHA *likeness* to humans.

A philosophical problem with the tactic of emphasizing that NHAs share many valued "human" traits is that it runs the risk of reducing other animals to lesser categories of "sub-humans." While other species are different, they are by no means failed or lesser versions of humans. Similar to the civil rights and environmental movement messages, animal activists should ask people to respect *diversity* between groups and individuals. But many animal activists may not want to or feel it is truthful to fully concede that humans and other animals are so completely different. Therefore, I contend that the best philosophical position upon which to base a message may be a blended one that embraces

both the fundamental commonalities that provide kinship and the specific differences that provide diversity.

While people may come to value NHAs and respect diversity, the concern is that they will still prioritize fellow humans over other animal species if they do not see some similarity that connects all animals together and gives them a reason to value other species on the same level as they value their own species. As a base connecting trait, I suggest that Regan's (2003) idea of being a conscious "subject of a life," may be the best option; it combines principles of both sameness and difference. Problematizing the fragile borders of humanity and species through deconstruction of speciesist language is a worthwhile goal of the animal rights movement. Hopefully it will serve to lift the cloud of deception that constrains humanity and to prod us closer toward a "surrender to the animal" (Derrida, 2002, p. 372) within ourselves.

Environmental ethics as it relates to all animals: Debates over individual versus holistic perspectives. Environmental ethics separates domesticated nonhuman species as being under the purview of human ethics and reserves environmental ethics only for application to *wild* nonhuman species. It therefore categorizes domesticated NHAs, such as farmed animals, as unprotected entities who do not possess the inherent value that wild species and humans do. This apathy toward domesticated nonhumans may be due to the fact that many environmental philosophies do not ask for a transformed conception of *humans* in relation to all other animals but rather ask for a transformed view of *nature*, where humans should value the maintenance of biodiverse ecosystems. Therefore, many

environmental ethics philosophies, even though some claim to be biocentric, remain more anthropocentric, or humanist, than animal ethics.

But even if animal ethics challenges the human/animal dualism more so than environmental ethics does, it still reinforces the related culture/nature dualism in some ways, but in a different sense than environmentalists. Animal ethics leaves the realm of wilderness largely to its own governance and only interferes to protect nonhumans from humans when the latter are exercising excessive violence or destruction (beyond basic survival needs). Animal ethics does promote guidelines for the treatment of nonhumans where environmental ethics does not – in human society. Here it seeks to grant these nonhumans the status of morally relevant beings, not based on their value to an ecosystem, but based on their value as conscious, sentient subjects of a life.

Therefore, humans may need to acknowledge some relevance in the culture/natural dualism and retain two separate but sometimes overlapping ethical systems – one for nature and one for human societies. For animal ethics, that means practicing an individual ethic toward all animals in human society and allowing wild NHAs and nature their freedom from dominating human interference. For most environmental ethics, that means practicing an individual ethic toward humans in human society while asking humans to avoid domination of nature, and, perhaps ironically, simultaneously managing nature according to a holistic ethic that allows for some nonhuman individuals to be sacrificed for the benefit of the ecosystem.

While both animal and environmental ethics are anti-instrumental, what may be lacking in both is a less humanist outlook where individual human rights are maintained

while humans' animality is embraced and the human/animal dualism is more overtly challenged. This less humanist outlook might increase our kinship with other animals and begin to privilege nature as a moral and inherently valuable domain that is not entirely separate from or "below" human society.

History of activism for nonhuman animals in the United States. The U.S. animal protection movement was founded in the mid 19th century and was largely dominated by welfare groups until the mid 1970s (Beers, 2006). In its origins, the animal protection movement borrowed activist strategies from the abolitionist and women's rights movements, such as using moral suasion to expose the reality of injustices (Beers, 2006). Since animal activists believed people were not willing to give up their superior status over other animals, the early movement leaders often used an anthropocentric approach and attached humane reform to human self-interest.

The animal protection movement of the late 20th century drew from the ideologies of the feminist and environmental movements to critique instrumentalism (Jasper & Nelkin, 1992). The anti-instrumentalism of the New Left questioned capitalism's growth imperative and its emphasis on the material instead of the moral. Rights rhetoric burgeoned in many movements in the 1970s, including animal rights. Jasper and Nelkin (1992) claimed the animal rights fundamentalists were more successful than welfarists at attracting members and formulating issues because they used strong visuals and moral language that was more dramatic and energizing.

Many animal protection authors suggested greater alliances with the environmental movement would be advantageous (Beers, 2006; Hall, 2006; Jasper &

Nelkin, 1992; Maurer, 2002), but to do so animal protection ideology would have to put greater emphasis on the aspects that overlap with environmental ideology. While the two movements have worked together to pass significant wildlife protection measures in the past, hunting and fur remains a point of contention (Jasper & Nelkin, 1992). The environmental movement is also reticent to actively promote sustainable plant-based diets or campaign against destructive factory farms, both out of fear of alienating members and a desire to avoid having their identity conflated with animal rights, which is seen as a less popular, less rational, and more "sentimentalist," ideology.

Western vegetarian ethics throughout the ages. Throughout history, all pro-vegetarian writers have shown a concern for the suffering that humans cause other animals, specifically suffering that is deemed unnecessary, such as food in many cases (Walters & Portmess, 1999). Writers often asked humans to stop repressing their pity and to bear witness to the horrors of the slaughterhouse. While writers from previous eras focused more on questions of moral purity and how to lead a good life, contemporary writers added to this a notion of animal rights and a need to deconstruct the human/animal dualism, arguing that there is not a morally-relevant difference between all animals. The authors' themes of ethicality are often based on avoiding unnecessary harm and showing restraint from excess.

Regan's (2003) version of animal rights argued that killing is to be avoided, and therefore, a goal of the animal rights movement is the "total abolition of commercial animal agriculture" (p. 1). Similarly, Singer (1990) argued that animal agribusiness,

whether free range or intensive, is a speciesist practice because it controls and sacrifices the *major* interests of the NHAs to satisfy *minor* interests of the human animals.

Humanity's rationale for eating animals may lie in an unconscious fear and contempt of wild animals. Wood (2004) argued that humans consume other animals to demonstrate control over the animal they dislike in themselves. Humans may surmise that the external animals they eat stand for the internal animal they must overcome. Similarly, Hall (2006) theorized that the root of humans' domination over other animals lies in their insecurity over humans' history as a prey animal, seeking to unnecessarily construct themselves as a predator for fear that the alternative is to be prey.

Most who claim meat-eating is natural for the human animal, even though anthropology reveals periods of greater herbivorousness and omnviorousness for humans, fail to address how unnatural it is for any animal to breed and enslave others as a food source via agriculture. This implies that the human practice of hunting wild animals, a practice approximately 20,000 years old (Mason, 1993), is more ethical under natural standards of predation than is agriculture, the latter being a more cultural domain. I believe the variety of perspectives on the issue reveal eating is both natural and cultural. This reiterates my earlier contention that the bifurcation of nature/culture is somewhat necessary in determining ethical actions that affect both domains. Therefore, when one has a *choice* about what one can eat, eating becomes more cultural than natural and is therefore subject to human ethical systems; this makes the choice to kill or exploit another animal for his/her body parts, in this everyday situation, morally untenable.

Vegetarianism in the United States today. While approximately 7% of the American population self-identifies as vegetarian on surveys, the percent of the population who is *actually* vegetarian is likely between 2 and 3%. About 1% of these people, or approximately a million people, are vegan (Maurer, 2002; Singer & Mason, 2006). The typical person attracted to vegetarianism is a young, white, middle-class, atheist female (Maurer, 2002). The main reasons people say they go vegetarian is for health and/or ethics, with environmental sustainability being another popular motivation (Maurer, 2006).

People who go vegetarian for ethical reasons tend to be more committed to remaining vegetarian (Maurer, 2006). Because health-motivated vegetarians may be tempted by the convenience of a meat-based diet and new lower-fat meat items, Maurer (2006) posited, "promoting concern for animals and the environment is essential to the advancement of the vegetarian movement" (p. 45). This agrees with Salt's and Gandhi's belief that vegetarianism should be promoted on the rationale of ethics more so than health, based on both the deontological belief that the ethical rationale was more solid and the utilitarian belief that it created greater long-term commitment to vegetarianism.

The need for deception in communicating about meat-eating. Because the ethicality of the human practice of raising and eating other animals has been debated since Ancient times, it is perhaps not surprising that many meat-eaters are uncomfortable discussing farmed animal welfare and animal rights. Animal agribusiness capitalizes on this discomfort by communicating to the public using ambiguous discourse that largely hide the problems with animal production and seeks to increase its perceived ethicality,

thereby reducing any consumer guilt. Derrida (2004) predicted this industrialized violence against animals will have to change as it increasingly becomes a "spectacle" (p. 71), forcing humans to decide they cannot face the negative image this abuse creates of *themselves*.

Conclusion

This chapter helps to define and bolster the animal rights and vegetarian moral philosophies that should serve as a basis for informing the messages of AROs studied in this dissertation. The next chapter focuses on communication theories that can guide AROs in making communication decisions, and it includes deontological and utilitarian framing debates among animal activists and scholars about how to construct campaign messages designed specifically to protect the lives of farmed animals.

CHAPTER III

COMMUNICATION THEORY AND LITERATURE REVIEW

Overview

In this chapter I focus on theory and scholarly literature related to communication, particularly on behalf of social movements. I begin with a basic overview of the social constructivist perspective on communication and meaning-making, including semiotics and Foucauldian discourse to explain the signifying power of language and why it is a site of social struggle. Then, communication ethics are discussed, primarily drawing upon public relations literature, including ethical challenges especially pertinent to radical social movements. The rest of the chapter narrows to examine literature specific to social movement communication; this includes the special challenges that social movement organizations (SMOs) face in designing persuasive communication campaigns, conveying counter-hegemonic ideas to the public, forming an identity, and attracting productive media attention. While this dissertation is not specifically a rhetorical analysis, I found it pertinent to include the strategic advice of select, contemporary rhetoricians on social change, especially Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca's (1969) theory of argumentation related to values, as values are a key part of this dissertation.

Because this dissertation specifically examines framing by animal rights organizations (AROs), a large section of this communication chapter is dedicated to framing, frame resonance, and the frame alignment process, mainly drawing upon social

movement theory in sociology. To help examine the framing debates within social movements in deciding how radical and critical to be, examples are included of internal framing debates within the American women's rights and abolitionist movements of the 19th century. This leads into a similar discussion of the current animal rights movement's ideological framing debates over whether to promote rights or welfare. This debate then narrows to explore animal activists' deliberations in food campaign frames over whether to promote veganism exclusively or to also promote industry welfare reforms. The chapter closes with an overview of two scholarly studies specific to the framing of vegetarianism. Throughout this communication chapter, scholarship specific to animal rights communication is provided when it exists and has not been covered in the preceding chapter on animal issues.

Communication and the Social Construction of Reality

The importance of human communication is that it is essential to the very creation and perception of reality for members of a society, and it is so elemental that it often makes the cultural appear natural (Berger & Luckman, 1967). Emphasizing a similar union between communication and culture, Carey (1989) described communication as a process through which a shared culture is created, modified, and transformed. This approach to communication is more humanistic than the once dominant transmission model, which viewed communication as a mechanistic linear process of information transmission between senders and receivers. In Carey's ritual view of communication, the purpose of communication is to build community and unity rather than to control information. Similarly, Hall (1997) conceived of communication as making and

exchanging meaning. Hall believed meaning, at its most basic, is the result of societies using their power to signify objects and concepts through language to determine what they stand for and how they are supposed to be understood within a culture. Communication is a cyclical process where ideological meaning is produced (encoded), consumed (decoded), and then reproduced into social practice (transformed) (Hall, 1980). This is not a neutral process, as Hall (1982) proposed that the dominant, elite culture use the media as a hegemonic tool to manufacture consent by shaping and reinforcing dominant ideologies so they seem like common sense. However, Hall (1980) believed that while audience members may decode texts according to the dominant or preferred reading of the producer, audiences are also active subjects who have some ability to resist intended meanings, for example, with queer readings of heterosexual characters.

Hall's and Carey's definitions of communication argue that language is a social construction and is therefore more unstable and malleable than it may appear. Saussure's semiotics contributes heavily to this constructivist view that language is a system of signs where meaning is arbitrarily assigned and is not natural or inherent; it is only made to look natural through the cultural codes that attempt to fix signifiers to signifieds (Hall, 1997). Dominant beliefs are therefore anchored to the "natural" through tropes, such as metaphors, which operate by channeling ways of thinking, almost imperceptibly, toward one related, preferred concept and away from others (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980). Because hegemony requires the consent of those who participate, it relies on the power of naturalization to conceal subjectivity and make dominant, constructed meanings appear as objective and fixed common sense notions (Hall, 1997).

The semiotic view that meaning is often relational, malleable, and constructed through difference, reveals the politics and values inherently constructed in language (Hall, 1997). For example, in binaries, such as *mind/body* or *culture/nature*, meaning is situated through opposition, according to hierarchical values that rely upon or even exaggerate notions of difference (Chandler, 2002). Jakobson introduced the idea that in each binary one term is marked and one is unmarked; the unmarked term, such as *mind*, is more fundamental, naturalized, and prioritized while the marked term, such as *body*, relates to it as secondary, lacking, or deviant (Chandler, 2002). Derrida's (1976) work on deconstruction seeks to challenge the power inherent in prioritizing one binary term over its supposed opposite by revealing the logical inconsistencies and instabilities of these classic oppositions.

Foucault's notion of discourse adds to the theory that language itself is embedded with naturalized power by showing how discourse, or a system of representation, has the power to rule in or out ways of talking about a topic (Hall, 1997). Foucault (1990a) conceived of discourse as the historically-influenced construction of knowledge (ideas, images and concepts) that is used to organize thoughts and action on a topic in a certain culture at a certain point in time. It operates via a complex system of social norms, relations, and rules that are historically influenced. Discourse has the capacity to control social practices and preserve institutional power through its management of what is considered to be "truth" and knowledge in a society (Foucault, 1980). However, it is more important to ask *how* something becomes true rather than what "is" true. For Foucault (1980), truth is produced "only by virtue of multiple forms of constraint" (p.

130). Power works through discourse to guide, condition, frame, and contain. Foucault conceived of discourse as working like a grammar to determine the conditions for what could be uttered but not dictating the exact utterances themselves (Hoy, 1981).

Because of its social influence, discourse "is the thing for which and by which there is struggle. Discourse is the power which is to be seized" (Foucault, 1990b, p. 1155). This idea that there will always be a struggle over discourse, as it cannot be permanently stabilized and fixed, allowed Foucault (2000) to be optimistic that change is possible:

> There is an optimism that consists in saying, "In any case, it couldn't be any better." My optimism would consist rather in saying, "So many things can be changed, being as fragile as they are, tied more to contingencies than to necessities, more to what is arbitrary than to what is rationally established, more to complex but transitory historical contingencies than to inevitable anthropological constants ..." (p. 458).

As organizations struggle to change discourse, the inherent, and often hidden, power in communication makes its strategic use an ethical issue. The following section addresses ethical concerns, particularly for advocacy organizations who strategically construct messages for persuasive purposes, such as the AROs I will be studying in this dissertation.

Communication Ethics

Since the ancient Greeks first started theorizing on the topic of communication, specifically rhetoric and the art of persuasion, concern over its ethicality has been a factor

(Marsh, 2001). Aristotle believed that rhetoric should demonstrate truth, and he proposed three kinds of proof by which the audience could judge the truthfulness of an argument: ethos (credibility of the speaker), pathos (quality of appeal to audience emotions), and logos (validity of the reasoning). These categories are still relevant today, as persuasive communicators can choose to use reasoned arguments or emotional appeals or a combination of both. Reasoned arguments are considered more ethical than emotional appeals because the former involves more facts, may include a fair presentation of the views of the opposing side, and invites the audience to logically evaluate the argument (Bivins, 2004). However, although emotional appeals are more simplistic and may be considered more manipulative, they are not inherently unethical, as long as the communicator is not harming the audience and does not hide the fact that the message is intentionally persuasive. These principles of truth and avoidance of harm are perhaps the two most fundamental and overarching values associated with ethical persuasion today (Bivins, 2004).

Truth

When it comes to what constitutes truthfulness, Bivins (2004) highlighted the need for persuasive messages to provide both factual accuracy and adequate context or completeness to avoid being misleading. If the opponent's side is presented, it should be stated fairly. However, advocacy communicators, being openly subjective, are permitted to be selective in what facts they choose to reveal publicly under many circumstances, except when it would be misleading and prevent the public from knowing something that is necessary for informed decision-making (Fitzpatrick & Gauthier, 2001). Persuaders are

not required to provide a full summation of all the facts on an issue to meet completeness requirements, but they should seek to "genuinely inform" others instead of creating "false impressions" (Martinson, 1996-1997, p. 44).

Another reflection of truth is the advocacy communicator's authenticity, which relates to Aristotle's notion of ethos and credibility. Authentic communication is about being true to oneself and to the audience (Baker & Martinson, 2001; Taylor, 1991). Baker and Martinson (2001) related communication authenticity to virtue ethics, requiring the communicator to be of good character and demonstrate personal virtue in both action and motivation. Authenticity involves virtues such as: integrity, loyalty to stated causes and institutions, and sincerity and genuineness. They said persuaders should sincerely believe that the idea or product they are promoting has the positive attributes they are touting and will be socially beneficial.

Avoiding Harm

Truthfulness also aids in the related ethical goal of avoiding harm. Steiner (1989) suggested an ethic of care should inform persuasion in order to prevent harm to publics. This is achieved by communicators showing respect for the dignity and integrity of the audience members. Towards the goal of respect, many scholars place an emphasis on the value of two-way communication (the symmetrical model) as a way to build a healthy public dialogue and democratic community more so than does pure one-way advocacy communication (asymmetrical model) (Grunig 2001; Wilkins & Christians, 2001).

Activist Communication and Ethics

However, Holtzhausen (2000) argued that the two-way symmetrical communication model is too narrowly defined as an organizational meta-narrative, and does not fully take into account the broader socio-political context in which public relations operates. Because public relations scholarship often ignores activist organizations, Holtzhausen (2000) alleged that public relations theory largely exists to support the maintenance of hegemonic power structures. Activists are often "the real voices of democracy" (p. 100) and do not deserve for public relations scholars to portray them as the enemies of social institutions. Holtzhausen noted the need to distinguish activist groups from the nonprofit organizations that are frequently discussed in public relations literature, as the latter are more closely aligned with dominant power structures, such as the corporations who largely fund them.

For corporate public relations practitioners working in an agency, a major conflict of interest that threatens ethical communications is their direct need to serve their client's interests versus their indirect responsibilities to serve the public's interest (Fitzpatrick & Gauthier, 2001). To counterbalance this client-bias and the corresponding utilitarian profit-motive that accompanies commercial communications, many ethical theories related to public relations favor duty-based or deontological ethics (which focus on right means) instead of consequential/utilitarian ethics (which focus on right ends). However, when the communicators are non-profit SMOs and are, in theory or intent, promoting the greater good instead of their own self-interested ends, one might wonder if they are

bound to the same obligation to favor deontological communication ethics over utilitarian ethics.

While simply having altruistic goals does not justify using any means to achieve them, one could make a case that the challenges SMOs face, such as marginalization, lack of resources, and restricted choices, should factor more specifically into public relations theories to provide more guidance for SMOs in a corporate-dominated media environment (Bronstein, 2006; Freeman, 2007a). Public relations literature provides only limited guidance to social movement practitioners, as it mainly advises corporate or mainstream organization on how to deal with activist groups as a stakeholder rather than coming from the SMO's perspective (Holtzhausen, 2000; Smith & Ferguson, 2001). On the other hand, while Alinsky's *Rules for Radicals* (1971) did address the real communications challenges and balance of power issues faced by SMOs, many might critique the author's brand of situational ethics as weighing too heavily on the utilitarian end of the scale.

Even the Public Relations Society of America's (PRSA) member code of ethics does not adequately address the special needs of in-house SMO communicators (PRSA Ethics, 2000). While PRSA principles such as advocacy, honesty and disclosure of information do apply to SMOs, other PRSA principles are only applicable to practitioners who work in an agency serving multiple business clients. The conflict of interest between serving the self-interests of a commercial client and the need to be socially responsible do not apply as directly to SMO communicators. Therefore the ethical issues that *do* apply to SMOs are more likely based on the ethicality of the communication act itself in not being

too utilitarian rather than concern over SMOs being motivated to seek selfish ends (Freeman, 2007a).

Persuasion and Propaganda

Advocacy communication is sometimes derided as manipulative "propaganda," particularly the communication materials of activist groups who are passionate about their cause and may appear close-minded or one-sided. However, propaganda has some distinctive, and largely negative, characteristics that distinguish it from mere persuasive speech. Jowett and O'Donnell (1999) described propagandists as highly utilitarian in putting their own interests above the audience's. They may purposely distort or misrepresent information, sometimes even concealing the source of the message from the audience. Propagandists often use language and emotion strategically to create a sense of power, possibly with exaggeration and innuendo, and they may deify their cause while demonizing or dehumanizing their opponents. Therefore, to be considered ethical, advocacy communicators must avoid the kind of manipulative, misleading, and reductionist message constructions that are characteristic of propaganda, such as: reliance on authority figures; use of unverifiable abstractions; belief in a fixed, polarized, black and white world; reduction of complex issues into simplified cause and effect; use of skewed time perspectives lacking continuity or flow; and emphasis on conflict over cooperation (Black, 2001).

Guidelines for Ethical Persuasion

Several scholars have provided useful guidelines for evaluating the ethics of persuasive communication. Baker and Martinson (2001) noticed there were overlapping

aspects of all definitions of ethical persuasion, so they designed their TARES test as a way to encapsulate all these common principles into one model. The five principles represented in the TARES acronym are truthfulness of the message, authenticity of the persuader, respect for the audience, equity/fairness of the appeal to the audience in considering vulnerable publics, and social responsibility for the common good.

Sproule (1980) also provided a useful checklist for ethical communication, focusing on deontological concepts like right motive and means, universal application, and proper fit with social values. One caveat to the latter is that the conflicts that are most likely to arise, specifically within campaigns of challenging movements, involve value clashes and potential disconnects between the public's definition of *the common good* and that of the SMO's. And it is difficult, in some cases, for an SMO in a challenging movement to show respect for the values and beliefs of the public if it is attempting to problematize and transform some of those values and beliefs (Freeman, 2007a). The next section discusses challenges SMOs encounter, even beyond communication ethics, in trying to use communication to construct and gain support for their version of *the common good.*

Communication Challenges Facing Social Movements

Unlike more mainstream or institutional organizations, SMOs within challenging movements struggle to transform a hegemonic view of reality in the dominant discourse. Stewart, Smith, and Denton (2001) explained that SMOs need to convince the public that not only is the commonly-accepted view of reality based on a faulty premise but the situation deserves to be defined as a "problem" that warrants their immediate attention.

The authors suggested that SMOs enable their target audiences to see that the problem is indeed severe and not being solved by the authorities, proving it requires immediate social intervention. To create presence for their issue in the minds of the public, SMOs can use persuasive words, stories, gory pictures, and revelations of inconsistencies in institutional practices. The audience must be made to feel that its assistance will indeed result in a better future and that overcoming the status quo is not impossible (Stewart et al., 2001).

Additionally, Stewart et al. (2001) defined five other persuasive functions of social movements. First, SMOs must improve the self-perception of members so that they view their participation as morally important work of which they can be proud. Second, SMOs should legitimize their movement through co-active strategies that appeal to society's common values while also engaging in confrontational strategies that decrease the legitimacy and credibility of opponents. Third, SMOs should prescribe a course of action for the public to redress problems. If factions within a movement each suggest different solutions, it can send mixed or confusing messages to adherents. Fourth, SMOs must mobilize members based on notions of shared identity and values, preferably using nonviolent tactics that garner public sympathy and support. Last, SMOs are challenged to find ways to sustain the movement's momentum (Stewart et al, 2001).

Maintaining Legitimacy

Cox (2006) acknowledged several key communication dilemmas pertinent to many progressive social justice movements, radical environmentalism in particular. First, society pressures SMOs to use socially acceptable language in order to be heard as

credible and reasonable, but it is hard to appeal to values that are part of the very system the SMOs are challenging, as discussed in the previous section on ethics. In deciding how critical to be of the status quo, Gitlin (2003) noted that SMOs must walk a line between being assimilated and "blunted" (p. 290) if they are too moderate and being marginalized and trivialized if they are too critical. Cox (2006) explained that the dominant paradigm of anthropocentric environmentalism claims the realm of common sense to gain legitimacy and portrays more radical environmentalists as unreasonable people who are outside of "symbolic legitimacy boundaries" (p. 61). In support of authentic communication, all public relations practitioners who are facing a disconnect between the public's beliefs and the organization's beliefs have the choice either to change the organization's culture to align it with society's expectations or to change the public's cultures to increase alignment with the organization (Heath, 1997).

Self-Interested versus Altruistic Appeals

Related to this debate over how critical SMO messages should be, SMOs must also decide whether to base their appeals on the public's individual self-interest or on altruism (Cox, 2006). This question is particularly relevant to movements that work on behalf of other species. Evernden (1985) argued that altruistic, non-anthropocentric appeals are necessary to win long-term support for the environment because appeals to the public's self-interest are ultimately just unproductive short-term strategies that reinforce a view of nature as a resource. But Cox (2006) distinguished between the pragmatism and short-term focus of *campaign* rhetoric and the long-term goals of *critical* rhetoric. The former often benefit from self-interested, reasonable appeals, while the

latter are meant to more broadly challenge existing values to envision new worldviews. While Cox mentioned the Deep Ecology Foundation, a lesser-known group, as promoting critical rhetoric instead of more pragmatic or self-interested campaign rhetoric, generally it is not clear by whom and how critical rhetorics are meant to circulate and become as influential as pragmatic campaign rhetoric.

Individual SMO Tactics in Relation to the Movement

Cox (2006) also asked if a movement benefits by having some SMOs who are more radical in tactics. Sociologists like McAdam (1996) and Tarrow (1998) argued that radical groups produce a beneficial "radical flank effect" that gains attention and provides incentives for institutions to bargain with moderates. But Cox (2006) acknowledged the inconclusiveness of this theory by stating that others believe radical groups, such as the Earth Liberation Front or the Black Panthers, ultimately hinder wide-spread support for a movement by alienating people from wanting to associate with the movement as a whole (Gupta, 2002). Either way, it appears that more moderate SMOs can only gain benefits from more radical SMOs if the moderates publicly distinguish themselves from the radicals (Gupta, 2002).

This seems to reinforce Heath's (1997) suggestions that issues managers should strive both to differentiate their campaign from others by highlighting unique attributes and positions and to create a strong organizational identity, or persona, that is truly representative of the organization's characteristics. To increase shared understanding with their publics, Heath (1997) suggested that organizations establish "zones of meaning" (p. 192) through articulating facts, values and policies in issues campaigns. In

order to create a shared understanding between *all* stakeholders, both members and nonmembers, an organization should ensure that its internal and external communications are in sync (Cheney & Christensen, 2001), which supports the ethical principle of communicator authenticity (Baker & Martinson, 2001). However, Roper (2005) argued that organizations may legitimately employ multiple identities to better connect with different publics, but agreed that these identities should still be in sync with the organization's mission and values.

Gaining News Media Access

Regardless of identity, SMOs face a challenge gaining media attention in which to address the public in the first place, as a lack of financial resources often precludes much use of paid advertising. When it comes to news framing of social issues, scholars have demonstrated that the news tend to support dominant organizations and the status quo while marginalizing or criticizing less powerful or minority groups, often focusing on their protest actions more than the issues (Gitlin, 2003; Fishman, 1980; Ryan, 1991; Tuchman, 1978). It is more challenging for less powerful groups to gain access to media coverage than it is for mainstream, official sources with more resources, so activists often have to escalate their protest activities to retain attention (Danielian, 1992; Gamson, 1988). Eley (1992) warned social movements that the "public sphere" in which they operate cannot be optimistically defined as a civic forum for public consensus but, instead, as a corporate-owned site of structured ideological negotiation.

Public Relations Tactics of AROs

In studying the public relations strategies of the United States' largest and most media-savvy animal rights group, People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA), Simonson (2001) found that PETA successfully enacted a public relations switch in the 1990s from relying primarily on news-based social protest towards adopting a more pop-cultural, celebrity-endorsed entertainment approach. Simonson contended that PETA's previous conflict-oriented approach often backfired in the news media: "they aim to be noticeable; they hope to interfere with practices and systems of meaning, and in the process of doing those things they strike some sensibilities as jarring or discordant" (p.401). Simonson believed that the news media offer limited opportunities for successful delivery of confrontational rhetoric for SMOs. As a result, PETA now prioritizes more popular or comical approaches to reaching audiences through entertainment, even though this tactic runs the risk of seeming sensational, trendy, trivial, or even offensive. Ingrid Newkirk, PETA's founder and director, explained that PETA is forced to turn to more sensational campaigns and be "stunt queens" (Younge, 2006, p. 12) to get any attention for issues because the news media do not find everyday animal exploitation newsworthy.

When it comes to any media campaign on behalf of animal rights specifically, Munro (1999) recognized that the animal rights movement faces the challenge of redefining normal animal use as abuse: "animal movement activists seek to stigmatize and mark as deviant what many people perceive as normal, legitimate, mainstream activities...The animal movement must transform the moral meanings associated with the worst of these practices, redefining them as socially irresponsible" (p. 36). Munro (1999)

agreed with Singer's (1990) contention that the animal rights movement's survival depends on its ability to maintain the moral high-ground in campaigns. The opposition knows this, since a common strategy of the counter-movements is to frame animal rights activists as misanthropic (Munro, 1999). This tactic serves to call into question the movement's morals, or at least their moral priorities, playing off of the public's deep-seated beliefs in human superiority.

Perhaps the counter-movements do a better job at connecting with the public's values than does the animal rights movement. Munro (1999) described a critique by Goode (1992) stating that most animal rights campaigns fail because they "lack moral capital, in that their arguments do not resonate with what most people believe and with how most people behave" (Munro, 1999, p. 37). These concerns are legitimate because the mainstream public's beliefs tend to coincide more with animal welfare viewpoints that still allow the use of nonhuman animals (NHAs) rather than with rights viewpoints that do not allow NHAs to be used as a resource. Wright (1990) expressed the mixed feelings the average person has about animal use, "I still eat meat, wear a leather belt, and support the use of animals in important scientific research. But not without a certain amount of cognitive dissonance" (p. 20). It makes sense that by publicly exposing the valid reasons for any cognitive dissonance (Festinger, 1957) people experience over using NHAs that the animal movement might begin to effect change.

The remainder of this chapter is used to discuss strategic communication techniques especially applicable to SMOs in effecting change. I begin with some

strategies drawn from rhetorical theory, followed by a larger section examining SMO framing in general, including current debates within ARO framing of vegetarianism.

Strategies for Social Change Drawn from Rhetoric Literature

Another way of examining the persuasive nature of communication is through the field of rhetoric. Rhetoric can be widely defined as the study of the nature and function of symbols in the human world and how they are used to construct our realities (Foss, Foss, & Trapp, 1991). This broad definition overlaps with the social constructionist definitions of communication I discussed in the first section (Carey, 1989; Foucault, 1990a, 1990b; Hall 1997). However, while Foucault and Hall's work tended to foreground language's inherent persuasiveness due to social inequality and power struggles, rhetoric, as I am using it in this section, prioritizes explanations of how language can be used more persuasively by the speaker for utilitarian purposes.

In *The New Rhetoric* Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca (1969) advanced a theory of argumentation centering on the challenge of reasoning about values. They defined argumentation as a process that seeks to resolve conflicts nonviolently by respecting the public as free thinking citizens who can make decisions based on reason. They claimed the goal of argument was to "create or increase the adherence of minds to the theses presented for their assent" (p. 45). To be successful, arguments must begin from premises upon which the author and audience agree.

Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca (1969) categorized premises into two types: real and preferable. Real premises, such as those based on facts, truths, and presumptions/probabilities, make it easier for the author to obtain more widespread

acceptance. Preferable premises, such as those based on values, hierarchies and loci of the preferable, are more subjective and often limited to appealing to only certain groups. For preferable premises, the authors suggested the use of *abstract* values, such as rights or peace, rather than concrete values for those communicators wanting to change the status quo. Because abstract values are less specific, they appeal to more people; when an abstract concept is applied to a specific person or situation it becomes more concrete and agreement levels may decrease.

People often may agree on values in general, but rank them differently by favoring some as superior. To help people rank these value hierarchies, the authors suggest the speaker focus on a loci (ranking basis) of *quality* instead of quantity when the goal is reforming the status quo. Quantity has normality or size on its side. Quality can focus on the rightness or uniqueness of concepts or individuals, as that which is threatened, irreparable, or priceless is deemed valuable (1969).

Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca (1969) said that abstract ideas, such as rights and justice, often need a sense of presence be created in order for the audience to experience them. Communicators can create presence, attachment, and connection by stimulating the audience's imagination and filling up their senses with the proposed idea. Film is useful for creating presence, as is the use of narrative and myth because they help audiences get to know individuals. Additionally, the communicator can use repetition and present tense verbs. The authors recommended that communicators use the ambiguity and subjectivity of language to their advantage by employing abstract notions that are open to interpretation so a larger variety of audiences will agree with them. Communicators can

also use ambiguity to extend a notion to relate to their cause. One way to render a notion more obscure is to use metaphor or analogy. The authors suggested that communicators make their notions flexible, adaptable, and progressive while making their opponents' ideas seem rigid and outdated (1969).

This relates to McGee's (1980) notion of an ideograph, such as rights, being a flexible yet positive cultural signifier due to its abstractness. McGee defined an ideograph as:

> an ordinary-language term found in political discourse. It is a high order abstraction representing collective commitment to a particular but equivocal and ill-defined normative goal. It warrants the use of power, excuses behavior and belief which might otherwise be perceived as eccentric or antisocial, and guides behavior and beliefs into channels easily recognizable by a community as acceptable and laudable. (p. 15)

Often a movement bases its rhetoric on the past and appropriating a popular ideograph (McGee, 1980). Therborn (1980) noted that new social norms are created by aligning themselves with older norms. Confrontational rhetoric by itself does not transform a society. The new ideas must be "situated in relation to elements of the prevailing normative conceptions" (Therborn, 1980, p. 81). Burke (1984) acknowledged that to debunk naturalized assumptions, one must introduce new principles and stretch them so that they link with accepted old principles.

Black (2003) concluded that the animal rights and the anti-abortion movements both employ the ideograph of rights in a diachronic or progressive fashion to include

other animals and human fetuses. The movements aligned these rights with "powerful, effective, nostalgic and sacred movements such as abolition, feminism, Black Power, Red Power, gay pride, and others" (p. 315). Black suggested that the animal rights movement must use rhetorical strategies that animate other animals to raise their status to persons from the reductionist metonyms of objects or property.

The next section examines social movements specifically, drawing largely upon sociological literature. It begins with an overview of social movement theory and its development and narrows to discuss SMOs' strategic use of framing to achieve communication goals, including a discussion of ARO frames at the end of the chapter.

Strategies for Social Movement Organizations

Many social movement theories have their roots in sociology, such as the Chicago School, which historically focused on collective behavior studied from a rationalist perspective – riots and panics, public opinion, fads, and revolutions (McAdam, McCarthy & Zald, 1996). This rationalist perspective often viewed social movements as irrational, emotional, and dysfunctional. By the 1970s, the study evolved to examine the structure and processes of social movements more directly and respectfully based on political opportunities and the capacity to mobilize resources. The cultural turn in the 1980s also introduced non-structuralist elements such as framing, meaning-making, identity, and emotions, which are influenced by academic areas such as semiotics, poststructuralism, Gramscian hegemony, discourse, feminism, and postmodernism (McAdam et al., 1996). The three major strands of social movement theory today are: political opportunities (addressing when and why), resource mobilization (addressing how/capacity), and

framing (addressing identity and meaning-making). Each theory looks at different aspects of social movements and often prioritizes different questions, so they can all be seen as complementary to creating a holistic view of a social movement (McAdam et al., 1996).

Political opportunity theory began in the 1970s, and it sought to determine under what political conditions social movements emerged and prospered at a certain place and time (McAdam et al., 1996). It examines such factors as grievance level, institutional access (such as having elite allies), rifts in government and elites, external resources, lower levels of state capacity for repression, and high perceived cost of inaction. Resource mobilization, a popular theory by the early 1980s, was influenced by elite theory, the idea that social movements are best led by a vanguard of professional activists. It sought to explain a movement's capacity for mobilization, which is reliant on access to resources and their organizational structure. Framing is said to mediate between political opportunity and resource mobilization (McAdam et al., 1996).

Framing Overview

Theories on framing developed in the 1970s, and by the mid 1980s Goffman's and Foucault's works and Gramsci's ideas on cultural consciousness and collective identity had influenced social movement theory (McAdam et al., 1996). A primary development in framing theory was Goffman's (1974) conclusion that people use expectations and schemas to make sense of all situations in life, looking for social cues to know when and how to interpret an event or action. Goffman called these "schemata of interpretations" (p. 21) *frames*, saying that humans must mentally frame their everyday experiences to be able to cognitively comprehend and manage their reality and make

decisions about appropriate actions. These frames serve to make things meaningful, organize experiences, and guide actions.

Many communication scholars have applied Goffman's ideas on framing to explain how communicators package their ideas through frames and how others respond to these frames. For example, Entman (1993) acknowledged the power of framing to identify problems and solutions: "to frame is to select some aspects of a perceived reality and make them more salient in a communicating text, in such a way as to promote a particular problem definition, causal interpretation, moral evaluation, and/or treatment recommendation" (p. 52). Gitlin (2003) described the importance of framing to meaning-making by stating: "Frames are principles of selection, emphasis, and presentation composed of little tacit theories about what exists, what happens, and what matters" (p. 6). Lakoff (2004) noted the centrality of framing to enacting social change, as change cannot occur without issues being strategically reframed: "Reframing is changing the way the public sees the world. It is changing what counts as common sense. Because language activates frames, new language is required for new frames. Thinking differently requires speaking differently" (p. xv).

This association to *common sense* suggests that framing is related to a Foucauldian notion of discourse, with discourse being a broader social process that helps define the boundaries limiting the ways a topic can be sensibly thought about and acted upon in a given society (Foucault, 1980, 1990a). Therefore, only certain frames would make sense within a discourse on a given topic. This relates to Cox's (2006) concerns that radical social movements are often constrained to use less critical discourse that stays

within "symbolic legitimacy boundaries" of mainstream discourse, making it hard to achieve ideological transformations of the status quo discourse. Foucault (2000) suggested that discursive transformations rely on criticism of the status quo:

> Criticism (and radical criticism) is utterly indispensable for any transformation. For a transformation that would remain within the same mode of thought, a transformation that would only be a certain way of better adjusting the same thought to the reality of things, would only be a superficial transformation. On the other hand, as soon as people begin to have trouble thinking things the way they have been thought, transformation becomes at the same time very urgent very difficult, and entirely possible. (p. 457)

Framing is a component in this process of ideological transformation, but Oliver and Johnston (2005) clarified that frames and ideology are not identical. They conceived of frames as a reductionist presentation strategy which is informed by ideology, or in other words, a larger normative belief system. Frames can be perceived as a recruiting tool for ideologies (Oliver & Johnston, 2005). Similar to discourse, ideologies serve as both a constraint and a resource to the framing process, and the resulting frames help scholars empirically observe ideology at work (Snow & Benford, 2005).

Framing serves as a method for social movements to package their ideologies and participate in the signifying process of creating shared meanings. Seminal social movement framing scholars include Gamson, who studied public opinion of social issues according to how the public makes meaning, and Snow and Benford, who studied social movement strategies and created a typology for the framing process (McAdam et al.,

1996). Snow, Rochford, Worden, and Benford (1986) wrote a seminal work privileging framing as a key element in soliciting participation in social movements, and since then framing has become an increasingly popular topic in social movement research (Benford & Snow, 2000).

Collective Action Frames by SMOs

Social movements create collective action frames with a specific purpose of building support for a campaign and mobilizing people to act (Snow & Benford, 1988). Gamson (1992) defined the three components of collective action frames as: (1) injustice (a problem exists and it is important), (2) agency (assurance that we can fix it if we work together), and (3) identity (side with us). However, Benford & Snow (2000) found fault with Gamson's claim that injustice is a necessary component of all collective action frames, even though it is common. They (Snow & Benford, 1988) more generally defined the three core tasks of framing as: (1) diagnostic (define the problem and possibly attribute blame), (2) prognostic (define solutions), and (3) motivational (encourage collective action).

The practice of selecting what Snow & Benford (1988) referred to as the *diagnostic,* or problem, component of the collective action frame can be contentious within a movement; disagreements may occur not only in defining the problem for the public but also in assigning blame, as causality for problems is often multi-faceted and complex. An SMO's diagnostic and prognostic frames should align, as the definition of the problem constrains the range of pertinent solutions (Benford, 1987). The *prognostic,* or solution, component of collective action frames is often influenced by external factors

that may create a need for the SMO to counter-frame remedies offered by one's opponents and rationalize recommendations (Benford, 1987). Additionally, factions within a social movement may reveal themselves in the different prognoses offered by different SMOs, such as the abolitionist versus litigator factions identified within the U.S. anti-death penalty movement that debated whether to work toward a federal ban or work on a case-by-case basis to save individual lives of current death row inmates (Haines, 1996).

The *motivational* component of collective action frames must construct a compelling motive that serves as an inspiration to engage in collective action toward the proposed solution (Benford & Snow, 2000). To garner this support, motivational frames often rely upon an appeal to shared values, demonstrating alignment between the goals of the SMO and those of the target audience.

Frame Alignment Process

In their seminal work, Snow et al. (1986) suggested that an SMO must strategically create alignment between its interpretive frames and those of potential adherents - linking an individual's beliefs and values with the goals and ideology of the SMO. The authors identified four types of frame alignment processes, which are discussed below: frame bridging, frame amplification, frame extension, and frame transformation.

First, frame *bridging* is the "linkage of two or more ideologically congruent but structurally unconnected frames regarding a particular issue or problem" (Snow et al., 1986, p. 467). This allows the SMO to engage "unmobilized sentiment pools" (p. 467),

whether they be individuals or other social movements, who are likely to be sympathetic to the issue. This alignment process seems to emphasize the SMO's use of media vehicles as a structural bridge to reach and organize previously unmobilized individuals who share similar interests in redressing a problem.

Second, frame *amplification* is the clarification of an interpretive frame, by tapping into existing values or beliefs in society, so that the frame bears on a particular issue and people see the connection. All movements utilize frame amplification, but it is particularly useful to movements whose values contradict society's core values and are in need of greater support (Berbrier, 1998). Frame amplification involves amplifying both values and beliefs (Snow et al., 1986). *Values* refer to guiding behaviors or states of existence that society deems worthy of protection and promotion (Rokeach, 1973). As values exist in a hierarchy that varies by individual, SMOs must elevate a presumed value to create salience for it in the mind of the viewer and demonstrate its direct relevance to the issue at hand (Snow et. al., 1986). *Beliefs* describe relationships and are "ideational elements that cognitively support or impede action in pursuit of desired values" (p. 470). Frame amplification must address the following core beliefs affecting desire to participate in collective action, such as people's need to believe the problem is serious, certain parties are to blame, change can happen if they act collectively, and their assistance is necessary and socially acceptable (Snow et al. 1986).

Third, frame *extension* is produced by extending the boundaries of an SMO's framework to show it includes other issues and concerns that are important to a group of potential adherents (Snow et al., 1986). This is useful for creating coalitions with other

social justice groups. To be ethical, an SMO needs to be sincere and avoid using frame extension to merely gain additional resources. Another caution is that extending the issues for which an SMO advocates can backfire by diluting the specificity of its original cause and resulting in increased disputes among core supporters.

The last alignment process, frame *transformation*, consists of creating new meanings and values often by changing old meanings (Snow et al., 1986). Oliver and Johnston (2005) claimed that frame transformation is actually *ideological* transformation. Frame transformation is particularly necessary when the values promoted by an SMO do not resonate or may even appear antithetical to conventional lifestyles (Snow et al., 1986). New values must be planted in society and erroneous beliefs reframed, such as a change in the way a domain of life is framed so that what previously seemed acceptable is reframed as unjust or problematic. This can sometimes be done under a broad or global interpretive frame transformation, such as a meta-narrative of peace, which reframes many domains of life under a new universe of discourse (Snow et al., 1986). Benford and Snow (2000) noted that frame transformation has not been adequately studied by scholars.

Various Frame Characteristics, such as Resonance

Characteristics of frames can vary between SMOs within the same movement. Benford and Snow (2000) noted four main characteristic of frame variances: problem identification and direction/locus of attribution; flexibility and rigidity, inclusivity and exclusivity; variation in interpretive scope and influence; and resonance. The more inclusive and flexible a frame is, the greater the opportunity it has to evolve into a master

frame. Master frames, such as rights, injustice, hegemony, and democracy, are the broadest in interpretive scope and can be used across different movements.

Another variable characteristic between framing approaches is the extent to which a frame resonates with its intended public. Benford and Snow (2000) claimed frame resonance is dependent on both *credibility* (of the speaker and message) and *salience* (with the values prioritized by the individual and society). A frame is more credible, and hence more persuasive, if its message is congruent with the stated beliefs and actions of the SMO. For example, SMOs should avoid such contradictions as preaching nonviolence and compassion and then acting or speaking in an aggressive, rude, or violent manner, as was demonstrated by the radical fringe of the anti-abortion movement (Johnson, 1997). The other resonance factor is salience, which can likely be increased if the values and beliefs that a frame espouses are also central in the targeted individual's hierarchy of values and beliefs (Rokeach, 1973). To be salient and resonant, frames must be commensurate with and relate to the target's personal experiences by not seeming too abstract or distant from his or her everyday life (Benford & Snow, 2000). Additionally, frames are constrained by the need to be culturally resonant and fit within a society's overall myths, narratives, ideologies, and identity. For example, McAdam (1996) credited successes of the Southern Christian Leadership Coalition in the civil rights movement to the accessibility and resonance of framing around accepted principles of Christianity and democracy as well as the congruence between the protesters' nonviolent resistance tactics and their frames of morality and justice.

Johnston and Noakes (2005) summarized Gamson and Snow's work on frame resonance to explain how to increase resonance from the perspective of the source, message, and receiver. The source must be perceived as credible, and it helps if he or she is charismatic. The message must be logically consistent, timely/relevant, and amplified and compatible with the culture. Also, the receivers must be able to bridge ideologies and extend or transform the frame to fit their existing attitudes and morals.

Tactics to Address SMO Framing Challenges

Tarrow (1998) proposed three major framing challenges facing SMOs. First, SMOs must decide whether to use familiar frames or new ones. Inherited and familiar frames are more resonant but may lead to passivity, but if frames are too new and unfamiliar then it may lead to inaction. Most successful groups use inherited frames but link them to action. Second, similar to the notion of resonance, SMOs must try to get the public to share their frame. In this effort, it helps if the SMO builds upon common values, not divisive ones. Third, SMOs must determine how to build unity through identity without being too narrow or elitist.

Polletta (2006) argued for the importance of storytelling and narrative to SMOs. Because storytelling is associated with emotion it works better in the cultural arena rather than in the arena of politics or finance. Similar to Perelman and Obrechts-Tyteca's (1969) suggestion that ambiguity is useful at appealing to larger audiences, Polletta (2006) noted that a dramatic story's openness to interpretation helps it galvanize unity between different groups to act collectively on a cause because they can each use the story in different ways with their constituents. Polletta (2006) also suggested that stories have a

better chance of resonating if they come from the cultural stock and seem familiar, such as linking one's movement to past freedom fighters and heroes.

Similarly, Zald (1996) stated that the strategic frames of one group are often built off of other master-frames of another group because we share a cultural identity. One's culture determines what an injustice is and what tactics are acceptable remedies. Yet there are cultural contradictions where the society accepts some injustices while denouncing other related injustices (ex: preaching democracy but accepting racial discrimination). Controversies often center on definitions of relations between rights and responsibilities or self-reliance and mutuality.

Lakoff (2004) advised communicators who were engaged in reframing issues to avoid using the opponent's language and frames when trying to negate them, as that only serves to inadvertently reinforce the opponent's way of seeing the world. An organization's language and frames should fit and emphasize its *own* worldview and values. In support of authentic communication, Lakoff concluded that U.S. conservative political groups were generally better at framing than progressive groups because conservatives "say what they idealistically believe" (p. 20) while progressives take the utilitarian approach of relying on polls to decide how radical or moderate to be. Lakoff suggested that advocacy organizations avoid talking primarily in terms of policy, facts, or negations and, instead, talk in terms of a clear set of simple *values* that accurately reflect what the organization stands for and express its "moral vision" (p. 74).

SMO framing tactics for reaching the news media. SMOs are challenged when using the news media to communicate frames, as the news media tend to use episodic or

event-oriented frames more so than thematic or ideological ones. Therefore, Klandermans & Gosling (1996) suggested that SMOs can only rely on the media (who prefer adversarial frames) to tell the public there is a conflict and who the major players are so people can take sides, but the SMO has to find other channels through which to educate the public on the logic of the issue itself. Gamson and Meyer (1996) claimed that the news media are more useful at communicating a social movement's diagnostic or prognostic frame components as opposed to its motivational components.

Ryan (1991) advised activist groups on how framing could be used to add drama to a campaign in order to increase newsworthiness and compete in a challenging media environment where they are at a disadvantage. She suggested SMOs use a values appeal to create resonance by framing themselves as a positive group trying to right moral wrongs in a conflict. Similar to Polletta's (2006) advisement to use narrative, Ryan (1991) stated that SMOs need to weave facts into a story with mythic plots and characters and culturally acceptable social goals, such as freedom, rights, and compassion. If their opponents muddle the issue by picking a similar frame and attempting to assimilate them, then Ryan suggested that SMOs switch to a change-oriented frame based on the idea of moral progress.

To better understand the communication challenges faced by key rights movements in creating moral progress in the United States, I discuss internal framing debates within the early women's rights and civil rights movements over the extent to which their messages should criticize or challenge the status quo discriminatory ideology in pursuit of legal goals. This relates to the previous discussion of how SMOs struggle to

create resonance and alignment for their frames with the public on issues over which they may disagree. And movement leaders often disagree over these tactical framing decisions that appear to involve compromising ideological integrity for public acceptance and tangible results (Cox, 2006; Gitlin, 2003).

Ideological Framing Debates in Historical U.S. Social Movements

Framing is a competitive process where leaders in challenging movements struggle externally with counter-movements and authorities to define frames, but there are also *internal* framing struggles over tactics and goals (Zald, 1996). This section's framing debates, from the early stages of human rights movements in the United States, serve as useful framing examples to this dissertation as they bear some relevance to today's animal rights movement framing struggles, since animal rights is also in a fairly early stage of development and seems radical for the time. In this section, I specifically explore some of the framing debates within the women's rights and abolitionist movements of the 19th century.

Framing of women's rights. In the book *Man Cannot Speak for Her*, Campbell (1989) claimed that women of the early 19th century began to acknowledge their own need for rights as they were denied the right to be spokespersons and leaders of any significance in the other social reform movements which they pioneered. Women then turned that collective action towards themselves and founded their own societies, convening the first women's rights convention in 1848. The convention's Declaration of Sentiments, which was heavily ridiculed by the male dominated press, based its

manifesto on extension of natural rights to women. This reaffirmed American values of democracy and justice and promoted reform not revolution.

Campbell (1989) identified two major contradictory framing choices made by women suffragists, one was more *ideologically pure* and the other more *politically expedient.* The former frame was the more "radical" or oppositional argument drawn from the women's rights convention that women deserved rights based on the equality guaranteed to citizens per the U.S. constitution (natural individual rights). The other frame, political expediency, was a more pragmatic and moderate approach asking for the vote on the basis that it would be socially beneficial if women could spread their innate moral virtues to the public sphere and better facilitate their caretaking roles as wives and mothers. The latter approach was considered more feminine, as it was selfless and altruistic, and its message played off of stereotypes of female purity. The former approach of asking for equal rights for oneself seemed more masculine and self-centered. The women's rights movement did experience factioning over sending these mixed messages that confused the identity of women's suffrage in the eyes of the public.

Campbell (1989) explained that movements must balance contradictory internal and external pressures to maintain buy-in of current members while still attracting new members to the cause. The paradox is that if you maintain ideological purity to advance a new worldview, you increase your *internal* unity through radical identity, and the conflict is then oriented externally toward the public. But if you use politically expedient ideologies that are less threatening to the status quo, it creates more *external* unity with the public but more disagreements and factions internally within the movement.

Campbell (1989) claimed that the more moderate and feminine suffrage appeals "exemplify the seductive strategies that the oppressed are constrained to use when they lack the legal, political, and economic power to effect change" (p. 96).

While Lucy Mott, Henry Blackwell, and Frances Willard used this more moderate and expedient approach, Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Susan B. Anthony were both what Campbell (1989) called "ideological purists" for using a natural rights argument. When speaking to legislators, Stanton and Anthony were somewhat aggressive and used legal and democratic arguments. They pointed out contradictions in the American legal system, such as women being denied the right to be tried by a jury of their peers and women being taxed without being able to vote. Taxation without representation was a powerful argument that resonated with democratic struggles in American history.

Additionally, Anthony and Stanton connected women's rights with other classic struggles that resonated with most men at the time: the American Revolution, the civil war, and the protestant revolution. Similarly, they used the analogy of comparing American men to tyrants such as kings, feudal barons, and popes – all very un-American traits that made democratic American men appear hypocritical. Later Stanton chose an indirect attack by focusing on the victim and comparing women to slaves instead of attacking the men as victimizers (Campbell, 1989).

In general, women did not "fit" as public spokespeople for a cause because the world of public debate was competitive and based on reason. If women were good at that, then they were equal to men in intellect, which was threatening to the dominant beliefs of male's superior mental capacities. Therefore, women had to balance being rational with

being feminine, so they often used a less authoritarian and more participatory style of communication. Many female rhetoricians used the following for proof and authority: biblical references, personal experience and narrative, vivid metaphors, and the power of presence.

Frances Willard embodied this paradox of feminine feminism, as she was strong yet attractive and fashionable. She used a moderate or "social feminist" approach of the temperance movement where she kept gender roles distinct but argued for society's need for female morality and talents in the public sphere. She and her group were much more accepted and popular than Stanton's group. She addressed audiences as if they were superior and she wanted their approval. She made women's rights seem less threatening to men by trying to convince them that women needed male protection so women could do their caretaking jobs better and more safely (Campbell, 1989).

Rev. Dr. Anna Howard Shaw, a prolific paid lecturer at the turn of the 20th century, also tailored her speeches to male audiences, except she used humor when pointing out contradictions in male arguments to reveal their absurdity (Campbell, 1989). She helped men laugh at their fears, and her sense of humor made her seem more sensible and likeable. Like Stanton and Anthony, Shaw used a natural rights approach based on democratic principles. She argued that it is more important to uphold democratic principles than to buckle to the opponent's trivial fear-based concerns of "what ifs." She seemed to be both ideologically pure yet tailor her argument to appeal to men's interests and concerns in a less threatening and expedient way through humor (Campbell, 1989).

Framing of the abolitionist movement. In the book *Forerunners of Black Power: The Rhetoric of Abolition*, Bormann (1971) identified two main rhetorical styles of abolitionist speakers in the mid 19th century, both influenced by Puritan preaching heritage: *agitation* (used by William Lloyd Garrison, Wendell Phillips, and Frederick Douglass) and *conversion* (used by Theodore Weld). While agitation and conversion are similar, respectively, to Campbell's (1989) dichotomized rhetorical styles of ideological purity and political expediency in the women's rights movement, Bormann's abolitionist's agitation style seems more radical and aggressive, in content and delivery, than the women's rights version, as the agitator rhetoric was more revolutionary than reformist in its critique of the United States.

Bormann (1971) analyzed these two rhetorical styles according to the two major challenges facing social movement leaders. First, leaders must mobilize people to their cause by showing them what is wrong and how they can fix it, similar to the diagnosis and prognosis frames of Snow & Benford (1988) or Gamson's (1992) injustice and agency frames. To do so, the movement must historically situate its cause into the cultural narrative while creating its identity and vision (Bormann, 1971). For example, it may be asking to go back to a better time or it may envision itself as part of an ongoing progression toward a better society. Second, similar to Gamson's (1992) identity frame, Bormann (1971) said the movement must create a group identity to gain commitment from members by making itself meaningful to members' lives.

When it came to abolitionists mobilizing people and situating the movement in the culture, both agitators and conversionists used testimony and evidence from

Southerners and former enslaved people to shock the public with the brutal facts of life under slavery (Bormann, 1971). Both types of rhetoric viewed slavery as a sin, but conversionists used biblical rhetoric more. Agitators focused on means, principles, and morals. They were openly critical of institutions and anyone supporting slavery, calling Americans hypocrites. They historically situated themselves outside of American experience as new revolutionaries because they believed society was corrupted by racism. On the other hand, conversionists focused more on ends, as the goal was to be persuasive. They appealed to people's noble interests for the American dream and principles of freedom. They saw their movement as the better part of the American dream – of guaranteeing the natural rights of man. The conversionist approach was effective, and many new anti-slavery societies started because of it (Bormann, 1971).

In addressing Bormann's (1971) second reform challenge of creating group unity, identity, and commitment, both agitators and conversionists sought to make the abolitionist movement a major force in their members' lives by labeling it as a moral duty. They both claimed it was a righteous cause sanctioned by God and was worth sacrificing and suffering for. Agitators were more stringent in their demand that slavery be outlawed immediately and full political rights be granted to all men. They did not water down the message to make it more appealing and felt disruption was necessary because it got attention and headlines. Conversionists, however, were more moderate at first and said abolition could happen gradually and black men should not be granted full voting rights immediately. But conversionists eventually came around to the full rights position, which Bormann argued was the rhetorically stronger position. Bormann

described the conversionists as being more successful than agitators at reducing internal fighting and at converting more people and appealing to outsiders.

In the civil rights movement a century later, Dr. Martin Luther King's rhetoric is more similar to conversionists with its promotion of democratic American values (Bormann, 1971). But it was firm like the agitators about the immediate need for equal rights. King's rhetorical style was evangelical and drew much support from churches. Contrastingly, the Black Power movement was more agitation-oriented and attacked cherished American values and social structures as inherently racist.

In conclusion, it seems like the preferred framing approach is a mix of the two styles. SMO communicators should promote strong moral values and be uncompromising on rights like the agitators and ideological purists. But they should make sure to situate themselves as reformers within American cultural values, and possibly use a softer sell, to be more appealing and make progress like the conversionists and political expedients. Just as Campbell (1989) and Bormann (1971) distinguished between more and less critical, or ideological, framing approaches in historical rights campaigns, in the next section I examine similar framing debates in the modern day animal rights movement regarding whether to prioritize rights versus welfare, or, alternatively, abolition versus reform.

Ideological Framing Debates in the Animal Rights Movement

Legal scholars Francione (1996) and Hall (2006a) suggested that animal rights activists should more authentically align their rights ideology with their activist

strategies. Both authors drew a distinction between animal welfare and animal rights ideologies and favored the latter.

Distinctions between animal rights and animal welfare. Francione (1996) said animal *rights* is about justice and the abolition of animal exploitation and not allowing other animals to be treated as a means to human ends. A rights philosophy demands the "incremental eradication of the property status of animals" (p. 4) to raise them to the level of "personhood" (p. 6). Francione claimed:

> The rights advocate makes one thing very clear: that animal rights is a position of the *outsider* who ultimately seeks a paradigm shift in the way that law and social policy regard the status of animals, as well as in the human/animal relationship. (p. 219)

Hall (2006a) defined animal rights as a deontological ethic granting nonhumans the right to privacy and freedom from human intrusion. It is an argument against use and domination in favor of freedom.

Conversely, Francione (1996) and Hall (2006a) defined animal *welfare* as a mainstream philosophy that merely regulates animal exploitation and the suffering of the NHAs we control. Francione (1996) stated that animal welfare has the following characteristics (a) it recognizes animal sentience but believes NHAs are not as worthy of moral respect as humans, (b) it recognizes the property status of NHAs while wanting to limit the rights of property owners, and (c) it accepts trading away the interests of NHAs in favor of human interests only if the latter are deemed significant and necessary.

Framing around animal rights not animal welfare. Francione (1996) claimed that the modern day animal rights movement is largely a hybrid of both rights and welfare. Hall (2006a) also noted that few animal protection organizations actually promote rights; humane groups clearly promote welfare, and, ironically, even many radical direct action groups ultimately focus on welfare and suffering. Francione (1996) explained that many AROs operate on the belief that they must use a welfare platform to get to the eventual goal of rights. Francione argued that a welfare approach is "structurally defective" (p. 4) at accomplishing an abolitionist rights agenda. It is "counterproductive on both theoretical and practical levels," (p. 5) as a social movement must align its ideology, goals, and strategy for logical consistency. Francione (1996) and Finsen and Finsen (1994) admitted that a largely welfarist animal protection movement has raised awareness of animal suffering over time, but it has not achieved the goal of decreasing the number of animals who are exploited.

Both Hall (2006a) and Francione (1996) critiqued utilitarian philosophies of *animal ethics*, like Singer's, as well as utilitarian *activist strategies* that fail to align the message and tactic with the kind of end world they seek. The animal rights movement fails to connect theory and practice in favor of pragmatism. Hall and Francione used metaphors such as *treadmills* and *chasing one's tail* to describe the futility of welfare reforms that seek to chip away at the myriad ways NHAs suffer within an exploitative system. Any such victories are shallow, as they merely mitigate a few of the endless array of symptoms but do not get significantly closer to eliminating the *root cause* – an instrumental view of NHAs as property.

In support of Baker & Martinson's (2001) authenticity principle in communication ethics, a rights message from a rights organization is honest communication that authentically represents the group's goals without hiding aspects that might be unpopular and less mainstream. Francione (1996) stated:

> Although many animal rights organizations claim to embrace the complete abolition of animal exploitation as a long-term goal, they often couch this message in more "conservative" terms in order to make their message more acceptable to the public. The problem with this approach is that it allows animal exploiters to respond that animal advocates are not honest or that they have some "secret," agenda, which is arguably harmful to the overall credibility of the movement. (p. 117)

Regarding a willingness to be candid, Hall (2006a) provided the example that most advocacy groups promote so-called "humane" farms instead of asking supporters to go vegetarian. Hall lamented that more advocacy groups did not "cultivate a public demand for peaceable, animal-free farming unabashedly" (p. 99) because it is defeatist and timid to give up on replacing exploitative systems and settle only for demanding improvements to the system. Hall likened this easy-sell approach to following a corporate marketing model that adjusts to fit the status quo and treats citizens like consumers by offering them a bevy of appealing choices. Hall argued that these expedient tactics just end up distorting the issue.

An additional advantage of maintaining an ideologically-based frame is that it enables the ARO to control the discourse by defining the problem around the root cause

of exploitation and enslavement instead of allowing the issue to be limited to animal husbandry/welfare or human self-interest. Regarding the weakness of using the latter frame, Francione (1996) explained:

> These arguments shift the moral focus from issues of justice for a disempowered group to the self-interest of the empowered group and open the debate to various empirical considerations, such as how dangerous meat eating really is or whether vivisection is really "scientific fraud" (p. 118)

Regarding the weakness of a welfare frame, Francione argued that limiting the frame to welfare fits with a mainstream industry perspective, allowing industries to claim they are in agreement or compliance with humane treatment. This may inadvertently benefit animal exploitation industries, whose strategy has been to alienate the animal rights activists by labeling them as misanthropic and militant in favor of co-opting the more conservative welfare groups and humane messages. So using a rights campaign that questions the legitimacy and existence of those industries has the advantage that it cannot be co-opted by them.

Framing around incremental abolition goals. Francione (1996) understood the pragmatic need for activists to feel effective and not campaign in vain for rights or seek violent revolution, so he acknowledged that rights, not just welfare, can be gained in stages of incremental abolition. But Francione cautioned that AROs should ensure their campaigns for incremental change are actually based on *rights* not welfare principles. He provided the following examples of rights campaigns: asking people to go vegan or to boycott companies who test on animals, ending the use of certain animals in certain kinds

of exploitation, protesting or exercising civil disobedience against an exploitative industry, or banning certain hunting or experimentation practices or devices. While Francione mentioned that a rights agenda could include banning cruel farming practices like battery cages or dehorning, he cited a caveat by Robert Garner (1993) who argued that this could just lead to public support for less cruel animal farming, a concern that is partially mitigated by including a vegan message in the campaign.

Francione (1996) also cautioned against relying too heavily on regulatory reforms of industry, as welfare campaigns for humane farming do. The industries have the law on their side as they are owners of animal property, so until animals are not considered property, Francione said it is futile to request significant legal change when "the legal system structurally limits the scope of reform to what is dictated by the instrumentalist position" (p. 171).

Blending animal rights with environmentalism. Hall (2006a) provided framing advice by recommending animal rights campaigns represent NHAs with dignity instead of perpetuating a stewardship narrative where NHAs are represented as weak victims who need human heroes to care for them. The popular use of imagery that emphasizes NHA cuteness can diminish human respect for them as fellow adults. Hall's definition of animal rights partially overlaps with environmentalism as it envisions more free nonhumans and less captive ones for humans to save. Humans must not focus on creating a world where they and other animals avoid all suffering and risk, as that is part of nature. Hall suggested the animal rights movement shift its focus to protecting free nonhumans and their habitat instead of campaigning for more space for captive animals, which just

further displaces wilderness. Hall proposed that animal ethics be put within the umbrella of ecology not humanitarianism. To do so successfully, environmental ethics must be encouraged to embrace an ethic that respects all individual animals, not just humans.

The next section narrows the debate over AROs using animal rights versus animal welfare frames to apply it to the framing of farmed animal issues and vegetarianism specifically.

ARO Food Framing Debates

For at least a decade, most major animal rights organizations, and even some animal welfare groups like the Humane Society of the United States (HSUS), have made farmed animals a primary focus, as farmed animals comprise the vast majority of NHAs killed in the United States and the numbers of animals killed for food increases each year (FARM death toll, 2007). Instead of primarily promoting veganism, the recent trend for some animal protection organizations is to encourage humane farming reforms, as has been successful in Europe. In some cases, the animal protection organizations promote less inhumane farm products, such as cage-free eggs, in addition to vegetarianism. This shift toward farmed animal welfare reforms has sparked debate within the animal rights movement over effectiveness, authenticity, and integrity in movement strategy. In this section, I will include arguments for both farming reform and veganism.

In favor of humane reform frames. Those activists who argue in favor of working with the meat industry to institute higher animal welfare standards often use utilitarian arguments about it being more effective at both eventually promoting veganism and currently reducing the amount of suffering billions of animals endure. Advocates for

welfare reform argue that to insist only on veganism, when it is adopted at such a slow rate, is tantamount to the movement activists turning their backs on the billions of animals who currently suffer.

Singer (2006) has become more of an incrementalist since the reasonable arguments for veganism presented in *Animal Liberation* in 1975 have failed to make veganism mainstream. Singer argued that raising awareness about the lack of farmed animal welfare in the United States will serve to raise public consciousness that minor improvements are still not enough. Park (2006), of the HSUS, took a pragmatic approach by arguing that welfare strategies attract more media attention to educate the public about poor farming conditions. Both Park and Singer cited England as an example of a country that has strong farmed animal welfare laws and a higher rate of vegetarianism. However, their arguments fail to prove that the former resulted in the latter, as it could be the other way around.

Park (2006) also suggested the utilitarian motive that farming reforms would drive up prices which would reduce consumption of animal products. It is probably true that cost-conscious consumers might eat fewer of these pricey domestic products if less cruel methods were outlawed in the United States, but this does not take into account that cheap, factory farmed animal products would likely still be readily available and popular due to free trade imports. Due to globalization, it seems the best way to ensure supply decreases is to decrease demand for any animal products.

Farm Sanctuary Director G. Bauston (2006) argued that the movement should not dichotomize welfare versus rights as both can be accomplished by asking the public to

view farmed animals as sentient beings instead of commodities. Similarly, Singer and Friedrich (2006), the latter being from PETA, contended that the philosophical argument for granting animals freedom from cages also "logically demands that we cease to exploit them for our own ends" (p. 12). While Francione (1996) argued that rights and welfare are separate philosophies, the author believed that certain incremental strategies, such as with farming, could be in keeping with animal rights. However, Francione admitted that it is problematic with farming to maintain a distinction between encouraging industry reform and implicitly promoting the resulting animal products.

In favor of vegan frames. Many activists do not believe Bauston's and Singer and Friedrich's (2006) contention that animal agribusiness reform is philosophically consistent with animal rights (Dunayer, 2006; Hall, 2006b; Lama, 2006; Mark, 2006; Torres, 2006). These activists emphasized that the purpose of animal rights is to promote life, freedom, and respect though the abolition of speciesist practices such as industrialized animal slaughter. They do not believe any implicit or explicit promotion of "happy meat" aligns with that life-affirming goal. Mark (2006) encouraged rights activists to fulfill their unique purpose in global animal discourse by asking activists, "If we are not going to give the hard message for what the animals need, who is?" (p. 25).

Some activists emphasized that working with animal agribusiness weakens the movement's integrity and credibility. Former cattle rancher turned activist H. Lyman (2006) maintained that if the meat industry is wrong and AROs team up with them, then the AROs are wrong too. Documentarian J. LaVeck (2006b) claimed that financial incentives encourage both industry and animal rights organizations to negotiate the "price

of public concern for animal suffering" (p. 21), as both groups end up growing and getting the resources they need. To dissuade AROs from helping animal agribusiness profit, LaVeck suggested:

> We don't need to be a part of dreaming up the details of the industry's new and improved systems of exploitation, and we certainly don't need to put our good names and our movement's credibility behind the questionable products that result. (p. 23)

Many activists expressed concern that by promoting farmed animal reforms they were sending conflicted and mixed messages that weakened their position by revealing an identity crisis. Sociologist Bob Torres (2006) argued that it shows conflict, weakness, and defeatism to promote a kinder version of speciesism. Torres stated that welfare is untrue to animal rights ideology and turns activists into advocates for exploitation. LaVeck (2006b) agreed that animal rights messages need to be clear, strong, truthful, and morally consistent. If AROs negotiate with industry, it sends a complicit message that eating meat is a necessary evil, and all that activists and the public can realistically do is try to mitigate suffering. LaVeck claimed that through welfare reform, activists are introducing "moral ambiguity into situations where the boundaries between right and wrong must never be allowed to blur" (LaVeck, 2006b, p. 23).

While Singer (2006) does believe activists should reform industry, in the philosopher's book with Mason (2006), they declare that from a consumer perspective veganism is superior because it provides ethical clarity, making it easier to make food choices and stick with them; conscientious meat-eaters will always be plagued with the

ethical dilemmas of determining both how humane is humane enough and whether or not the farms from which they buy are truly acting as humanely as they claim. If Singer and Mason's argument is turned around on the animal rights movement, it seems to imply activists should prioritize vegan campaigns, as they lack the ethical ambiguity dilemmas of promoting so-called "humane" farms.

The authenticity and power of ARO communication is also compromised when AROs sanction agribusiness's appropriation of principled terms that guide the animal movement, such as "compassion" and "humane," thereby lowering the threshold for what these terms mean in society. These terms represent something positive to the public, but in reality the movement has allowed them to misleadingly represent something less positive – a softer version of killing and approved amounts of suffering (LaVeck, 2006a).

Ethical communication issues with humane reform frames. Lama (2006) indirectly addressed communication ethics by noting that humane reformers think they are tricking the trade into eventual abolition when in reality the trick is on them, as the industry uses the activists as economic leverage to sell so-called "happy meat." This echoes Francione's (1996) concern that when animal rights activist campaigns claim to be reasonably reforming agribusiness to better fit mainstream animal welfare standards, the public may be mislead about the activists' more "radical" abolitionist agenda of moving them toward veganism. The industry can then point out this breach in communication ethics to undermine the credibility of activist groups.

Controlling the discourse by defining the problem around rights. All questions, strategies, and solutions stem from how the problem is defined. LaVeck (2006a) and

Dunayer (2006) suggested that animal rights activists retain control of the discourse by defining the problem as exploitation and slavery not husbandry and cruelty. A husbandry frame is too narrow, excluding both the larger issue of the NHA's right not to be exploited and humans' lack of need for their exploitation in the first place. This echoes Hall's (2006a) and Francione's (1996) suggestions that animal rights campaigns be brave enough to maintain a rights ideology, since being outside the mainstream is essential to transforming the status quo. Activists create framing challenges the more their campaigns focus on reforming, instead of transforming, the mainstream use of NHAs for food, because a vegan solution then remains more radical in the eyes of the public. LaVeck (2006a) argued that when some animal groups work with industry on welfare reforms it can set back the whole animal rights movement from a framing standpoint:

> The focus of public dialogue irrevocably shifts from the questionable morality of using and killing animals, to an elaborate, endless wrangle over how the deed will be done – conditions, treatment, standards and regulation. In this new framework, public calls by animal advocates for the boycott of all animal products, for nonparticipation in exploitation, have no place. Such talk is now an embarrassment for the participating animal groups, and a joke for the meat industry people. Such talk is now relegated to the realm of "radicalism." (p. 20)

Vegan frames and the connection with environmentalism. In considering whether to prioritize humane farming reforms or veganism, LaVeck (2006b) reminded activists that *any* animal products, even ones that are cage-free, are less sustainable and contribute to greater environmental devastation. Unlike farming reform campaigns, campaigns

supporting veganism have the added benefit of being able to emphasize sustainability, which benefits all animals, including humans and wild, or free, NHAs. Conversely, welfare campaigns are limited to focusing on a reduction of suffering for captive nonhumans and fail to relate to environmental issues.

Similarly, Hall (2006b) reminded animal rights activists to see the big picture of how their work connected with other social causes, such as environmentalism, in seeking to transform humans' dominionistic attitude toward others and nature. "We're seeing the biggest set of extinctions and the most ominous climate indicators in modern history," Hall claimed. "Negotiating with industries is fiddling as Rome burns. We should be very busy learning a different way to think about other animals and the earth" (p. 25). Hall's (2006a) belief that animal rights is about letting NHAs live free from human interference requires that animal activists work toward ensuring a healthy environment with habitat for all animals. Hall advocated that AROs promote veganism to work toward this mutual goal of animal rights and environmentalism. Regarding the animal rights goal of veganism, I use the following section to explore Americans' attitudes about vegetarianism and meat-reduction as well as two scholarly studies examining framing of vegetarian messages.

Framing of Vegetarianism

American consumer attitudes about vegetarianism and meat-reduction. To frame vegetarian messages effectively, it helps to understand public opinion and motivations regarding meat-eating. A 2007 study by the Humane Research Council (HRC) found that, while total vegetarianism remains a marginal diet in the United States, 13% of Americans

consider themselves semi-vegetarians and over a quarter of the population says they are actively reducing their meat consumption. This latter group, comprised largely of women and older consumers, is primarily motivated to reduce meat consumption based on self-interest, such as health, rather than on animal or environmental protection. While consumers view vegetarian foods, such as fruits, vegetables, and whole grains, as healthy, they also generally believe that some animal products, such as dairy, chicken, and fish, are also healthy.

Vegetarian advocates are challenged by survey findings that reveal 80% of Americans do not intend to ever fully eliminate meat from their diet, based on concerns that it may be unhealthy to do so and their overall preference for the taste of meat. However, almost a quarter of the population is interested in reducing their meat consumption by half. Therefore, the HRC study (2007) suggested that it would be more effective for vegetarian advocates to promote meat *reduction*, rather than vegetarianism:

> For an adult audience, meat reduction is clearly more acceptable than complete veg*ism, and there is strong evidence that this approach to veg*n advocacy would persuade more people. Moreover, there is evidence that those who start to reduce their meat consumption become more open to both further reduction and possible elimination of meat from their diet. (p. 7)

Consumers interested in meat reduction and vegetarianism have concerns about its potential inconvenience and cost, so advocates should provide consumers with practical information on how to overcome these barriers (HRC, 2007).

When presenting rationale to the public, pro-vegetarian organizations should avoid mass advocacy campaigns in favor of more targeted approaches (HRC, 2007). Consumers often need to hear a variety of reasons for going vegetarian, and it is likely most effective to lead with a health argument followed by a concern for animal suffering. While the health rationale, in particular, and the environmental rationale, to some degree, are more useful at encouraging people to *reduce* meat consumption, the animal suffering rationale is most effective at motivating people to *eliminate* meat. Therefore, the HRC (2007) concluded that it may be most strategic for different advocacy organizations to use different appeals, such as some concentrating on meat-reduction for health reasons and others on vegetarianism for animal protection reasons.

Communication tactics of U.S. vegetarian advocates. Maurer (2002) studied vegetarianism as a movement promoted by not only animal protection organizations but also vegetarian societies, which is broader than my dissertation's specific focus on animal rights organizations. According to Maurer, vegetarian ideology "provides both a critique of meat-eating and a vision of a vegetarian world" (p. 2). The vegetarian movement's ideology is based on three core tenets that vegetarianism supports (1) human health, (2) compassion for NHAs, and (3) environmental sustainability (Maurer, 2002, p. 71). Most vegetarian activists also believe that promoting a gradual dietary transition leads to more permanent vegetarianism for a convert than does encouraging immediate dietary changes. While advocacy organizations tend to agree on the merits of all these tenets, they sometimes disagree on how to present them to the public. For example, their advocacy materials may choose to promote one benefit over others, or they may shy away from the

word "vegan" as it is less familiar and may seem extreme to the general public. Some even opt to replace the familiar but culturally-loaded term "vegetarian" with the more benign and clinical term "plant-based diet" (Maurer, 2002).

Similar to Cox's (2006) discussion of choosing self-interested versus altruistic appeals, the main framing debate within vegetarian advocacy is whether to promote altruistic ethical benefits or whether to promote individual, human health benefits (Maurer, 2002). Maurer found that, for wider appeal, vegetarian campaigns often chose to emphasize health. Yet Maurer cautioned that this dietary focus can lead to a loss of integrity over the meaning of the term "vegetarian," as the public may mistake it for meaning someone who does not eat unhealthy red meat or one who eats very little animal flesh.

Conversely, a campaign that promotes a strong vegetarian identity based on ethical principles, for other animals or the environment, can be inspirational at creating a stronger commitment than a more vague and mainstream appeal to a healthy plant-based diet, but it attracts fewer people (Maurer, 2002). Yet, if vegetarianism becomes just another healthy lifestyle choice for consumers, it loses its ideological edge; vegetarianism should be seen as a "public moral good" (p. 126) if it is to become more ideological and foster greater commitment. Maurer explained:

> Many vegetarian leaders seek to move health-motivated, self-interested "exemplary" vegetarians to a more ethical focus that centers on caring more about other humans and animals. This deepening of motivation they see as being key to sparking a greater interest in vegetarian advocacy. (p. 121)

Additionally, there is the issue that the message should be authentic to the organization's beliefs. Maurer (2002) mentioned the conflict that vegetarian leaders face when communicating an ethical message internally to dedicated members to retain commitment while using a more individualistic message externally, for utilitarian purposes, to gently attract a wider range of new members. Based on this dilemma, Maurer claimed, "vegetarian advocates must walk a fine line, balancing practicality and moral consistency" (p. 128). She cited activist Jim Mason's description that vegetarian advocacy must avoid seeming fanatical and purist on one end and hypocritical on the other.

Maurer (2002) concluded by suggesting that the vegetarian movement will not significantly increase the number of vegetarians unless it proves that meat is either dangerous to one's health or is immoral. Since meat consumed in small quantities is not extremely dangerous, it seems that the ethical argument is the most compelling option. So, perhaps it is advantageous that a significant portion of the vegetarian movement is comprised of animal rights organizations whose campaigns tend to promote more ethical urgency and inspiration than do the campaigns of solely vegetarian organizations. Maurer suggested that the vegetarian movement build even closer ties to animal and environmental movements to increase its influence and resources and perhaps transcend its marginal presence.

Public resonance of PETA's vegetarian frames. While Maurer (2002) studied vegetarianism as a broad movement, Mika (2006) conducted a more specific study examining the efficacy and resonance of PETA's vegetarian print messages by

conducting focus groups with non-vegetarian college students. Mika (2006) found that PETA faced a common social movement paradox in having to choose between being inoffensive, but going unnoticed, or being offensive and confrontational, but gaining more attention. For example, PETA was successful at getting the attention of research participants via shocking frames, such as "The Holocaust on Your Plate" or "Jesus was a Vegetarian," but those frames were considered offensive; but frames considered less offensive, such as "meat's no treat for those you eat" or "vegetarianism is nonviolence," tended to generate little attention with participants.

Mika (2006) concluded that *none* of the variety of PETA's vegetarian print messages or their corresponding frame alignment processes were particularly successful at resonating with focus group members, with the possible exception of frames that invoked an *absent referent* (Adams, 1990) to foreground the living being behind the body parts. However, since PETA used a human woman's body, separated into pieces of meat, to generate the absent referent, it was perceived as offensive by some feminists.

Mika categorized PETA's appeals to patriotism, religion, and sex as examples of the frame *extension* alignment process (Snow et al., 1986). Mika found that participants considered the patriotism appeals to be shallow; the religious appeals to be preachy, factually inaccurate, and offensive; and the sex appeals to be attractive but not convincing.

Regarding more controversial frames like claiming "meat is murder," comparing factory farming to Nazi concentration camps, and showing the "lamb of God" being slaughtered, Mika's (2006) participants suggested that an organization that relies on

shocking messages seems less credible, less believable and less reasonable, and they compared PETA to the radical anti-abortion movement. Mika suggested that shocking frames, which were the only ones categorized as examples of a frame *transformation* alignment process (Snow et al. 1986), may work better with the public if the object of moral outrage is constructed to be the animal agribusiness industry and not meat-eaters themselves because participants resented the implication that *they* were the culprit. So Mika (2006) concluded that while moral shocks might possibly work for other animal rights campaigns besides those condemning meat-eating, use of moral shocks was probably less effective at inducing people to go vegetarian, specifically, since that required people to sit in judgment of themselves and confront the potential immorality of their own ingrained lifestyles; it's presumably more effective for AROs to ask people to condemn the cruel actions of *others*, such as a seal-clubber or animal researchers (Jasper & Nelkin, 1992).

In general, participants wanted more reasoned, factual appeals, like toward health, rather than symbolic or shocking appeals (Mika, 2006); however, I noted a caveat that the sample text was largely limited to simplistic messages, such as billboards and stickers, instead of more contextualized pieces like brochures, web pages, or films. Yet while Mika's focus group participants were not convinced by shocking visuals and "condensing symbols" (Jasper & Nelkin, 1992, p. 398), these tactics do appear to resonate with a minority of the public, as they have worked as a useful recruiting tool for the animal rights movement, even more so than social networks (Jasper & Nelkin, 1992). And Gamson (1992) noted that injustice frames often do not work upon a single exposure, but

they can be a first step toward a viewer's eventual transformation with repetition and more reflection over time. To conclude, Mika (2006) suggested a utilitarian tactic that AROs should target certain messages toward certain audiences with whom the frame is likely to be more resonant rather than using a broad-based approach that will appeal to some and offend others.

Summary and Conclusion

As participants in a challenging movement, AROs participate in the struggle over discourse via their strategic use of framing to package their non-speciesist ideologies in ways that resonate with a largely speciesist American public. AROs are faced with the challenge of redefining accepted practices, like meat-eating and animal farming, into socially unacceptable practices. In redefining the status quo as problematic, AROs must decide how to balance the risks and benefits involved with either being too critical and oppositional or too moderate. They also must decide whether to base their appeals on altruism and ethics, which match their own altruistic motivations and ethical beliefs, or on human self-interest, which can potentially gain wider acceptance.

Promoting altruistic rights or justice appeals that more openly critique the status quo of animal farming and meat-eating is a deontological communication approach for AROs. Conversely, promoting appeals to human self-interest, such as the healthfulness of vegan diets, or messages that fit within dominant animal welfare discourse, is a more utilitarian communication approach. These deontological and utilitarian choices are widely debated within the modern day animal rights movement. Lessons from 19th century human rights framing debates suggest that appeals should retain ideological

integrity by strongly promoting and demanding rights while also increasing expedience by being culturally resonant and non-threatening. This fits with the advice of many animal rights activists who want their messages to reflect their beliefs on animal rights by problematizing exploitation instead of husbandry and supporting veganism instead of humane farming reform.

Because animal rights is a moral issue, ARO communication strategies and message content should retain the moral high ground and avoid being misanthropic, untruthful, or harmful. In the persuasive process, AROs need to avoid being propagandists by constructing ethical messages that are largely based on deontological concerns of the message being accurate, contextualized, authentic to their own beliefs, identified by source, and respectful and fair to the audience, society, and even opponents.

Rhetorical theory suggests that because AROs challenge the status quo, they should appeal to abstract values and use ambiguity to create wider appeal. Because AROs are marginalized, it is useful to emphasize values that prioritize quality, such as rightness or uniqueness, over quantity. AROs can create a sense of presence and connection for these abstract values by utilizing compelling visuals or mythic narratives to introduce individuals. For greater acceptance, new ideas should connect with culturally-accepted and historically-situated ideas and narratives, such as how AROs expand the democratic notion of human rights to extend to nonhuman animals, so the latter are seen as persons not property.

Framing theory, particularly from sociological literature, provides much guidance for AROs in constructing collective action frames that define problems and culprits;

demonstrate the problem's severity and urgency; suggest logical, realistic solutions that will work; and encourage participation based on shared identity and values. ARO frames must align their own ideologies and values with those of the audience through frame alignment processes such as bridging to reach sympathetic, unmobilized adherents; amplifying important beliefs and values to demonstrate their relevance to the issue at hand; extending the issue's relevance out to other related social issues; and transforming people's views on the issue so they see it in a new light.

To increase the resonance of frames, AROs should seek credibility by using arguments that are authentic to their beliefs, truthful, and logically consistent. To be resonant, frames should also create salience by appealing to key, culturally-accepted values and connecting them to the audience member's personal everyday life. Additionally, AROs should promote a clear set of simple values, more so than facts, that accurately reflects what it stands for and promotes its moral vision of a primarily vegan human society that does not domesticate and exploit fellow animals.

In conclusion, this communication chapter provides theories that help inform research questions in order to identify the problem, solution, and motivational components of collective action frames used by major AROs in their food-related campaigns to protect farmed animals. I examine the values AROs promote and determine which of these supports altruism instead of human self-interest. I also categorize ARO framing choices into the four frame alignment processes of Snow et al. (1986) and suggest ways that AROs could increase alignment and resonance with the public while still retaining authenticity with animal rights ideology in pursuit of frame transformation.

Additionally, I explore whether ARO leaders make communication strategy decisions primarily based on a deontological or utilitarian basis, and then I determine what implications those framing choices have for the animal rights movement. I support Baker & Martinson's (2001) idea of speaker authenticity and Lakoff's (2004), Hall's (2006a, 2006b), LaVeck's (2006a, 2006b), and Francione's (1996) idea of using frames that reflect one's ideology and values. Therefore, in this dissertation I will assess to what extent ARO food frames are informed by animal rights ideology and how they could better reflect these non-speciesist principles in ways that could resonate with the mainstream public.

CHAPTER IV

METHODOLOGY

Overview

In this dissertation I study how ideology informs activist discourse, specifically the framing of values and ideology in food campaigns of U.S. animal rights organizations (AROs). I take both a descriptive and prescriptive, or normative, approach to exploring this topic, using critical and cultural studies theories to inform textual analysis (Hall, 1997) and interviewing methods (Denzin, 1997; Patton, 2002). The descriptive portion explores representation via a textual analysis of how food advocacy materials frame the issue in terms of problems, solutions, and values alignment, all of which is considered in relation to animal rights ideology and the organization's mission. This analysis of representation in the text is complemented by an exploration of the production side of activist framing via phone interviews with organization leaders to determine why they construct issues and values the way they do and how it relates to animal rights ideology. Interviews with ARO leaders determine in what ways communication decisions are made based on deontological principles versus more utilitarian principles.

The normative component of this dissertation promotes the idea that a social movement ideology, meaning its basic guiding philosophy and worldview, should inform its discourse for integrity, or authenticity, in communication. Toward this end, I am interested in both animal ethics and communication ethics. The ideal activist frame must

make sense logically and ethically so it is both strategic and truthful to the social movement ideology. For animal rights ideology, specifically, this would be supportive of AROs constructing non-speciesist frames for purposes of frame transformation that help to deconstruct the human/animal dualism that is at the root of animal exploitation. What are the implications if animal rights organizations choose to be more utilitarian in seeking expedient frames that promote the kind of behavioral dietary changes that may lead to decreased animal exploitation of some farmed animals but without necessarily fostering a transformation to non-speciesist values that support rights or liberation for all nonhuman animals (NHAs)?

Research Questions

The first six questions comprise the descriptive portion, rather than the prescriptive portion, of the analysis. The first three questions are based on Snow & Benford's (1988) three components of collective action frames: (1) diagnosis of problems and also culprits, if applicable; (2) prognosis, or solutions; and (3) motivation. In this dissertation, I identify the first two aspects of ARO frames in terms of what problems and solutions they define and also assess the values they promote to indicate the motivational framing component.

1. Is the diagnosis component of collective action frames identifiable, and, if so, what problems are defined by AROs and who, if anyone, is blamed?
2. Is the prognosis component of collective action frames identifiable, and, if so, what solutions are defined by AROs?

3. To which values are AROs appealing? How are AROs creating any alignment between their values and those of the public?

For research question three, I am especially interested in identifying values related to NHAs and considering how these values resonate with American culture and contribute to frame alignment processes, such as bridging, amplification, extension, and transformation (Snow et al., 1986).

The fourth research question is inspired by Cox's (2006) dilemma for the environmental movement regarding whether radical advocacy organizations should promote altruistic values versus appealing to human self-interest.

4. How and to what extent do frames appeal either to self-interest or to altruism and social responsibility (toward humans and/or nonhumans)?

Research question five is broad enough to allow for exploration of the feedback I receive from the interviews with ARO leaders discovering how they make communication choices and why. I am particularly interested in whether they are more influenced by deontological principles that encourage them to convey what is most true, significant, or authentic or by utilitarian principles that encourage them to convey whatever will work the best to produce the desired beneficial effect. This relates back to research question four's categorization of values into altruistic appeals, which are likely to be more deontological, and human self interest appeals, which are likely to be more utilitarian.

5. How do organization leaders explain their framing choices, particularly in terms of ethics and ideology?

Research question six examines a central interest of this dissertation, the extent to which AROs' messages have deontological integrity in being informed by and/or supportive of the animal rights ideology and missions that guide them, instead of being informed by more mainstream ideologies, such as animal welfare. By animal rights ideology, I mean the basic challenge to speciesism that embraces the idea that humans should not exploit other animals or solely value them instrumentally (Francione, 1996; Regan, 2003; Singer, 1990).

6. Are each organization's frames congruent or incongruent with (or representative or unrepresentative of) its organizational mission and animal rights ideology (versus animal welfare ideology)?

The last question comprises the normative, or prescriptive, component of the analysis that interprets the ARO advocacy choices in terms of their implications for the animal rights movement and makes recommendations for how frames could better align with animal rights ideology for increased communication integrity.

7. Overall, what are the possible implications of ARO framing choices in terms of communication ethics and animal ethics? What frames are considered the most supportive of animal rights ideology and/or are examples of frame transformation?

Under Analysis

This section describes the criteria for determining what and who should be studied to best answer the research questions above. It includes profiles of the AROs and descriptions of these AROs' advocacy materials selected for analysis.

Criteria for Inclusion

This study is designed to ascertain how organizations with more "radical" ideologies, as opposed to more mainstream ideologies, are challenged to frame and present their values and ideas, some of which may be new to society, and enact frame transformations (Snow et al. 1986). Animal rights organizations are used in this study as an example of a social movement organization with a more radical ideology, seeking fundamental change to the speciesist status quo, especially the accepted practice of animal farming and meat-eating. While similar to AROs in some respects, vegetarian societies and animal welfare organizations were not included in this study, as they are often more moderate, so, on the whole, they do not face the same framing challenges that AROs do.

To be considered an ARO, one's mission must be defined as focusing on ending NHA exploitation and use by humans, such as for food, entertainment, research, and sport, under the belief that NHAs are inherently valuable beings, not resources. This does not preclude AROs being supportive of some animal welfare initiatives, such as decreasing the suffering of domesticated animals, in some cases. In contrast, the mission of an animal *welfare* organization is defined by a focus on improving the well-being of and decreasing the suffering of NHAs, particularly ones who are domesticated or used by humans. It does not necessarily challenge the right to use these NHAs for human benefit or challenge notions of human superiority or the human/animal dualism. A catchphrase expressing this difference is that animal rights promotes *empty* cages while animal welfare promotes *cleaner* cages. Relating this to the food issue, animal rights would

promote veganism and an end to animal agriculture while animal welfare would reform animal agriculture to be less cruel.

The ideological differences between animal rights and animal welfare makes the two less comparable and precludes the use of welfare groups in this study, as one cannot expect an animal welfare group, such as the Humane Society of the United States (HSUS), to promote an animal rights frame. Vegetarian societies are also not included in this study, although they are somewhat applicable as food advocacy groups, because their missions are not specifically non-anthropocentric nor are they dedicated to animal advocacy or to prioritizing animal ethics as the main rationale upon which to promote vegetarianism. They can choose to emphasize more mainstream or self-interested rationale, such as health, and not be untrue to their guiding ideology or mission.

To be comparable and relevant, the animal rights organizations (AROs) selected for this study had to fit the following criteria: (1) have an animal rights mission in contrast to a more moderate welfare mission, (2) have a significant focus on ending exploitation of NHAs for human *food*, such as with campaigns promoting veganism not just farmed animal industry reform, (3) have campaigns that provide a variety of print and electronic advocacy pieces aimed at the public, and (4) be headquartered within the United States with at least a national presence instead of a local presence (regardless of the organization's size).

The limitation of this study to the United States is both for the sake of convenience, as this is the country in which I reside and the national movement in which I participate, and for relevance, as the United States has a high level of activity and

influence worldwide. For example, the world's largest ARO, People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals, was founded and is headquartered in the United States. Additionally, America often exports its factory farming methods as well as its diet heavy in animal proteins worldwide, which means any changes to American food production or nutrition can have global consequences for farmed animals, human health, and the environment (Nierenberg, 2003; Pollan, 2007; Schlosser, 2001; and Singer & Mason, 2006).

The following five organizations, listed alphabetically, most fully met the criteria for inclusion in this study:

1. Compassion Over Killing (COK)
2. Farm Animal Rights Movement (FARM)
3. Farm Sanctuary (FS)
4. People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA)
5. Vegan Outreach (VO)

While it could be argued that a few more organizations might also have met the criteria, it was useful to keep this study limited to a manageable number of the most applicable and relevant organizations so that the interviews and deep analysis of the many advocacy materials could be completed in a timely manner.

Description of Organizations Included in this Study

Compassion Over Killing (COK). The first ARO is Compassion Over Killing (COK), a smaller group located in Washington, D.C. with six paid, full-time staff. It was founded in 1995 as a high school group but has since expanded to include a nationwide

focus. It has approximately 17,000 supporters and sends out an estimated quarter million materials a year (Erica Meier, personal communication, November, 14, 2007). Its mission statement says, "working to end animal abuse, COK focuses on cruelty to animals in agriculture and promotes vegetarian eating as a way to build a kinder world for all of us, both human and nonhuman" (COK Home Page, n.d.). In 2005, COK won *VegNews* magazine's award for the "Organization Most Deserving of Your Year-End Donation," as COK is quite efficient with its relatively small budget of under $500,000 (COK Financial, 2006). COK has led some successful campaigns exposing factory farming cruelty, particularly in the egg industry. Due to its success, its original founders were recruited to the HSUS's farmed animal welfare department several years ago, and COK is now under the leadership of Erica Meier.

Farm Sanctuary (FS). The second ARO is Farm Sanctuary (FS). Its mission, up until 2008, was, "to expose and stop cruel practices of the 'food animal' industry through research and investigations, legal and legislative actions, public awareness projects, youth education, and direct rescue and refuge efforts," (FS Financial, 2006). In early 2008, the same time period that the analysis for this dissertation was performed, FS underwent a communications and image update, which included a new design for its Web site, a new logo, and a revised mission. The new mission is:

> Farm Sanctuary works to end cruelty to farm animals and promotes compassionate living through rescue, education and advocacy. We envision a world where the violence that animal agriculture inflicts upon people, animals and

the environment has ended, and where instead we exercise values of compassion. (FS Home Page, 2008)

FS was founded in 1986 after co-founders Gene and Lorri Bauston rescued a sheep, Hilda, off of a "deadpile" at an auction and nursed her back to health in their apartment (About FS, 2008). FS has since grown into the largest farmed animal rescue organization in the nation, with more than 100,000 members, 7,000 visitors to its main Web site, 75 paid staff, and revenues of over $5 million (FS Financial, 2006). It operates sanctuaries in Watkins Glen, NY (headquarters) and Orland, CA, as safe havens for thousands of rescued farmed animals. The co-founders divorced several years ago, and the organization remains under the leadership of Gene, who has since changed his sir name back to Baur. FS was a co-sponsor with the HSUS on the first ever ballot initiatives for farmed animals that outlawed pig gestation crates in Florida and Arizona. Veal crates were also banned in Arizona, and FS is now working on a similar initiative in California that also includes a ban on caging hens (FS Ballot Initiatives, 2007).

Farm Animal Rights Movement (FARM). The third ARO is the Farm Animal Rights Movement (FARM), which is located in Bethesda, Maryland and is run by founder and President, Alex Hershaft. It claims to be the oldest animal rights group dedicated to farmed animal issues, as it grew out of the Vegetarian Information Service in the late 1970s and changed its name to the Farm Animal Reform Movement (FARM) in 1981 (About FARM, n.d.). During the interview for this dissertation, Alex Hershaft explained that the name that FARM had used for more than 25 years had recently been

revised to Farm Animal *Rights* Movement to better reflect its strategy of promoting veganism instead of industry reform.

FARM defines itself as a "public-interest organization advocating plant-based (vegan) diets to save animals, protect the environment, and improve health" (About FARM, n.d.). FARM describes its strategies to enact dietary and agricultural reforms in the following way, "while we occasionally engage in and/or encourage civil disobedience at slaughterhouses and similar attention-getting devices, the majority of our efforts are grassroots educational campaigns, massive media blitzes, and participation in government decision-making processes" (About FARM, n.d.). It has seven paid staff and annual revenues of over $400,000 (FARM Financial, 2006). Throughout its existence, FARM has organized many annual national animal rights conferences, and it promotes a variety of ongoing campaigns, such as: The Great American Meatout, Meatout Mondays, World Farm Animals Day, Choice School Lunch, Gentle Thanksgiving, Veggies for Ecology, Well-Fed World (Global Hunger Solutions), Bite Global Warming, and the Equal Justice Alliance (fighting the federal Animal Enterprise Terrorism Act).

People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA). The fourth ARO is People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA). Even though PETA addresses a wide range of animal issues, in addition to vegetarianism, it has been included in this study because it is the largest animal rights group in the world and one of the most well-known. PETA was founded by Alex Pacheco and Ingrid Newkirk 25 years ago in Washington, DC, after the founders conducted an undercover investigation of a primate research lab, resulting in the first ever conviction of an animal researcher for cruelty (About PETA History, n.d.).

Now headquartered in Norfolk, VA, and run by founder Ingrid Newkirk, PETA has expanded to include international offices and boasts more than 1.8 million members and supporters (About PETA, n.d.).

PETA says it is "dedicated to establishing and defending the rights of all animals. PETA operates under the simple principle that animals are not ours to eat, wear, experiment on, or use for entertainment," which is how the group defines animal rights in basic terms (About PETA History, n.d.). Its official mission statement describes it as an animal rights organization and states:

> PETA focuses its attention on the four areas in which the largest numbers of animals suffer the most intensely for the longest periods of time: on factory farms, in laboratories, in the clothing trade, and in the entertainment industry… PETA works through public education, cruelty investigations, research, animal rescue, legislation, special events, celebrity involvement, and protest campaigns. (About PETA, n.d.)

PETA gets more media attention than most animal protection groups; its staff members were interviewed by the media over 2,700 times in 2005 and had over 1,000 opinion pieces published in print media. In the fiscal year ending July, 31, 2005, PETA had revenues of over $31 million, employed more than 150 full-time paid staff, sent action alerts to more than one million email subscribers, had more than 37 million people visit its Web sites, and filled over 650,000 requests for vegetarian starter kits (About PETA Financial Report, 2005). Notably, the demand for vegetarian starter kits in 2005 increased four-fold from the previous year (About PETA Financial Report, 2005).

Additionally, PETA's Web site, GoVeg.com, received a *VegNews* magazine Veg Webby Award for "Best Vegetarian Resource" (About PETA Financial Report, 2006).

Vegan Outreach (VO). The fifth ARO, Vegan Outreach (VO), is a small and highly focused group run by founders Matt Ball and Jack Norris, the latter a registered dietician. It was formerly located in Pittsburgh, PA but is now primarily operated from Tucson, AZ. It began as Animal Liberation Action in 1993 before evolving several years later into Vegan Outreach, based on distributing a brochure of the same name (VO History, 2007). VO describes itself as "promoting a vegan lifestyle," and "working to expose and end cruelty to animals through the widespread distribution of our illustrated booklets, *Why Vegan, Even If You Like Meat,* and *Try Vegetarian*," which are distributed by other animal advocacy organizations and volunteers, such as students (About VO, n.d.). More than five million hard copies have been distributed world-wide, the vast majority in North America, with translations in four languages besides English (VO History, 2007). A major VO campaign is its "Adopt a College" program that has resulted in the distribution of over 1.5 million booklets on more than 800 college campuses between 2003 and 2007 (VO Adopt a College, 2007). Over a decade after its founding, it operates with just three paid staff members, and it posted annual revenues of just over $400,000 for the 2005-2006 fiscal year (VO Financial, 2007).

Advocacy Materials under Investigation

I analyzed electronic and print advocacy materials that are directly related to farmed animal or food animal issues and directed at the public, including the organization's members. I did not include materials solely aimed at the media,

government, industry, or institutions in general. I prioritized messages designed for direct communication with individual members of the public, as these messages can be more candid and are less likely to be tempered by a concern of having to meet newsworthiness criteria or be filtered through an independent third party before reaching the public. Klandermans & Gosling (1996) suggested that SMOs use non-media channels to educate the public on the logic of issues because the news media tend to emphasize the conflict over the issue itself. The bulk of each ARO's materials and Web pages are geared toward the public.

The definition of "food" advocacy includes vegetarian or vegan materials advocating a plant-based diet, but it also more broadly includes any material addressing the human practice of farming NHAs or hunting/fishing them to use for food. As the purpose of this study is primarily to examine how AROs construct and frame values related to other animals, I excluded vegetarian recipes and cooking tips from analysis but not the discussions of vegetarianism itself. I analyzed both electronic and print advocacy materials that the AROs were currently using, which I gathered in January 2008. What could not be viewed over the Web was sent to me by the AROs. To help offset any costs involved in printing and shipping these materials, I sent each ARO a $20 donation.

Electronic advocacy materials. Electronic materials included Web pages and self-produced video footage (including television advertisements and animal cruelty footage) relating to food issues. While most AROs run multiple Web sites related to food campaigns, for manageability, I solely concentrated on the main or home Web site for cok.net (COK), farmusa.org (FARM), farmsanctuary.org (FS), and veganoutreach.org

(VO). Since PETA was the only ARO included in this study that addresses a broad range of animal rights issues in addition to food, I concluded that PETA's goveg.com Web site, which is dedicated to food issues, was more pertinent to this dissertation than was its home page of peta.org. Whenever information on an ARO's home Web page linked to a related Web site, such as fishinghurts.com, eggindustry.com, or vegforlife.org, I analyzed the information on that related Web site's home page but did not analyze that whole Web site to avoid the amount of text becoming overwhelming.

Other electronic advocacy materials studied included film and video footage. This was especially pertinent to COK, FS, and PETA who document animal farming and fishing practices in undercover and overt filming situations and provide copies of this for the public. For COK, I analyzed its *45 Days: The Life and Death of a Broiler Chicken* DVD. For FS, I analyzed its *Life Behind Bars* DVD on intensive confinement, narrated by actress Mary Tyler Moore, and its *Factory Farming Compilation* DVD, which included *Eggribusiness, Making of a Turkey, The Downside of Livestock Marketing,* and *Humane Slaughter?* I also included documentaries posted on FS's online video gallery covering two investigations into the Canadian foie gras industry and a dairy industry investigation titled, *Behind the Milk Mustache.* PETA has many videos online, but I chose to concentrate on its two most popular: (1) *Meet Your Meat*, a documentary of the life and death of cows, pigs, and birds on factory farms, narrated by actor Alec Baldwin, and (2) *Chew on This*, a DVD that succinctly promotes 30 reasons to go vegetarian. I also analyzed online investigative footage that applied to PETA's current cruelty campaigns against kosher slaughter, Tyson chicken farms, and Kentucky Fried Chicken.

Additionally, when AROs posted PSAs or television advertisements on their Web sites, I included those as well, such as COK's seven television spots, which primarily ran on MTV, FS's twelve television PSAs and three radio PSAs, and PETA's "Happy Orgasm Day" electronic vegetarian greeting card for valentines day.

Print advocacy materials. Print materials included food-related advocacy for mass distribution, such as vegetarian starter guides, booklets and pamphlets, print advertisements, and collateral pieces, including stickers, clothing, buttons, and posters.

A key advocacy piece for all AROs is some version of a vegetarian starter guide, as that is often the lengthiest, full-color publication they distribute. Many are 24 pages. There is COK's *Vegetarian Starter Guide,* FS's *Guide to Veg Living,* PETA's *Vegetarian Starter Kit,* and Peta2's (teen/youth division) teen starter guide *What They Never Told You* .... I did not analyze a vegetarian starter guide from FARM, as it only distributes guides produced by others, such as FS's guide. I analyzed VO's three primary booklets, *Why Vegan?, Even if You Like Meat,* and *Try Vegetarian*, which have some resemblance to vegetarian starter guides, but these 16-page booklets concentrate more on animal cruelty issues and vegetarian rationales instead of recipes and food tips. The latter practical diet and nutrition tips serve as the primary information in VO's *Guide to Cruelty-Free Eating,* which was not analyzed in this study.

VO did not have any other print publications I analyzed, and COK only had a pork leaflet and an egg industry leaflet. FARM's print materials were mainly double-sided, full-color postcards focused on specific campaigns. I analyzed eight of FARM's postcards: three for the Great American Meatout, one for Meatout Mondays, one for

Well-Fed World, one for Bite Global Warming, and two for the general promotion of vegetarian starter kits.

Being the largest organization in this study, FS and PETA had the most print publications, so I had to exclude some. From FS I chose: *How we Treat the Meat we Eat* brochure, *You can Help Stop Factory Farming* brochure, *Farm Animals Have Feelings Too* leaflet, *Factory Farming: Destroying the Environment* brochure, *Choose Veg for Life* brochure, *20 Reasons to Go Veg for Life* leaflet, a series of five "Say No" leaflets aimed at specific factory farming practices, and three print advertisements. I did not include FS print pieces that were related just to the sanctuary, aimed at kids, or focused only on certain campaigns. To keep the text size manageable, I also did not analyze a series of ten older brochures that tell "The Truth About …" a variety of animal products.

From PETA, I chose: *Chop Chop* environmental leaflet, *People are Saying* celebrity leaflet, *Think before You Eat* black celebrity leaflet, *The Truth about Chickens* brochure, *Foie Gras: Cruel to Ducks and Geese* leaflet, *What's Wrong with Eating Turkeys?* leaflet, *What's Wrong with Dairy?* leaflet, *Being Boiled Hurts* lobster leaflet, *Fishing Hurts* anti-angling leaflet, and the *Take a Closer Look at Fish* brochure. I excluded PETA print publications aimed at children and teens or ones targeted to certain campaigns, such as KFC.

Collateral pieces, while seemingly trivial, often convey a core, simplified message indicating an ARO's most fundamental and prioritized beliefs. COK had two shirts, a tryveg.com bumper sticker, and a "See her as more than a meal" poster. FARM had five shirts, three bumper stickers, three buttons, six posters, and an "Animal Rights Now!"

rubber bracelet. FS had eleven shirts, nine bumper stickers, and three sets of smaller stickers. PETA had nine small stickers, five bumper stickers, five shirts, two buttons, three posters, and a vegetarian tabling display containing four posters. VO had one "Boycott cruelty, go vegan" bumper sticker, one "Choose compassion, try vegetarian" bumper sticker, and one "Vegan Outreach, choose compassion" shirt.

While a textual analysis of current materials can only provide a snapshot of the organization's framing approach at one point in time, the interviews with organization leaders will provide some historical context for framing strategies over time. The following section explains the methodology for analyzing the advocacy text and interview data.

Cultural Studies Methods

In the circuit of culture, as defined by British cultural studies scholars such as Stuart Hall, the meaning of a cultural phenomenon is most thoroughly explained through analysis of its many combined influences and their interaction (DuGay, Hall, MacKay, & Negus, 1991). These influences, or cultural processes, include "how it is represented, what social identities are associated with it, how it is produced and consumed, and what mechanisms regulate its distribution and use" (p. 59). To explain animal rights discourse on the issue of food, I examined several cultural processes, namely its representation in mediated communication texts and its production by AROs.

Production and representation are closely aligned processes, as producers encode meanings in their texts. "This concern for the culture of production takes us back once again to questions of representation and identity, but also forward to questions of

consumption" (DuGay et al., 1991, p. 60). While this dissertation does not directly study the audience and its consumption, some aspects of social identity and consumption are revealed through interviews with organization leaders about their interactions with audiences and how the public influences ARO framing choices. The two methods of textual analysis and interviewing complement each other, as textual analysis reveals *what* meaning was constructed and the interviews help reveal *why* meaning was constructed in that way.

Textual Analysis

I used the qualitative method of textual analysis to examine overall patterns and meanings constructed in print and electronic ARO advocacy communication on food. Textual analysis is a useful tool due to its open-ended nature and ability to allow the researcher to delve more deeply into issues and meanings than do quantitative methods. My qualitative analysis process followed Hall's (1975) description of textual analysis, which includes a three-step process: (1) a long preliminary soak in the text – initial readings and light note-taking of all text (including visuals) that allows one to focus on issues while still seeing the big picture, (2) a close reading of the text – getting more focused and taking detailed notes to start identifying strategies and themes that can be used to structure the paper, and (3) interpretation of the text – explaining what and how meanings were constructed through those themes across categories and what realities were represented (p. 15).

Hall's (1997) book on representation provided additional guidance on how to use post-structuralist concepts of semiotics and Foucauldian discourse to examine meanings

in texts. Visuals and written text were analyzed in context with one another to better interpret implied meanings. During analysis, I analyzed how AROs were using emphasis, metaphor and analogy, repetition, word choice, catch phrases, color, symbols, photo images, illustrations, placement and proximity, space, mood and tone, emotion, facts, values, narrative, contrast, voice, activity and passivity, music, characters and subjects, species, names, identification, authority figures and experts, celebrities, historical or cultural reference, eye contact, expression, camera angles, lighting, attractiveness and appeal, disgust, omission, and the natural versus the industrial. I assessed in what position AROs wanted the presumed human subject to be and what they wanted him/her to experience.

Although the research questions emphasize human values and ideology, this does not mean that I focused only on text messages and images of *humans* only. I also analyzed discussions and visuals of farming or fishing practices and descriptions of NHA qualities and experiences. These persuasive messages are embedded with values, not only in indicating how humans treat NHAs and identifying traits humans might appreciate in fellow beings, but also how human audiences will presumably *respond* to these messages. I wanted to ascertain to which preferred conclusions ARO frames were leading viewers and to which values or emotions the AROs appeared to be appealing? For example, photos of pigs stuck in gestation crates, chickens shackled upside down in a slaughterhouse, or calves being separated from their mothers are likely meant to elicit sympathy and outrage due to an aversion to suffering and cruelty, while photos of

animals enjoying the sun outdoors, being petted by people, or nursing their young are likely meant to elicit feelings of identification, peace, pleasure, and/or companionship.

In ARO texts, there were some anthropocentric values constructed that related most directly only to humans, such as the promotion of the human health benefits of veganism. While these are only indirectly related to research questions about animal rights ideology, they are especially applicable to the research question categorizing self-interested versus altruistic values. But not all altruistic values are necessarily non-anthropocentric. For example, the promotion of veganism as aiding more equitable food distribution to mitigate world hunger is both anthropocentric and altruistic. It emphasizes human interests but not at the expense of other animals, so it relates to the question about altruism but not the questions about animal rights ideology.

Even though this is not a quantitative content analysis, it was sometimes useful to note the prominence and general proportion of space and emphasis AROs dedicated to discussing certain frames, such as how much they emphasized anthropocentric aspects of food in relation to focusing on NHAs or which frames were given more attention. While emphasis was not able to be calculated in a precise percentage, it was expressed in larger proportions, such as "approximately one third" or "roughly half." Prominence is relevant to note, as a heavier emphasis by AROs on self-interested values, for example, might indicate a form of speciesism by implying the public is and prefers to remain anthropocentric. This would relate to research questions by possibly indicating that the AROs are less willing to significantly engage in frame transformation and direct promotion of animal rights ideology.

Interviews

To gain a contextualized perspective on the production of advocacy materials, I conducted in-depth phone interviews with the executive directors or presidents at each ARO. This applied to research question five, ascertaining how ethics and ideology play a role in ARO framing strategy. While it would have been beneficial to conduct an ethnography at each ARO and interview multiple staff members involved in constructing messages, this was a time and cost-prohibitive option as the AROs are located in five different cities across the United States and the textual analysis portion of the dissertation is also time-consuming. Therefore, in selecting just one person of the same position to interview at each ARO, I believed the executive director was likely to be the most influential and knowledgeable spokesperson regarding the ARO's framing decision-making process and rationale. I contacted each participant by email in December 2007 to explain the project and assess their willingness to be interviewed. I then asked them each to sign a consent form approved by the Institutional Review Board's guidelines for protection of human subjects. Each participant consented to having his/her real name used and having the interviews recorded for transcription.

The five ARO leaders I interviewed by phone in January 2008 were: Erica Meier (COK), Alex Hershaft (FARM), Gene Baur (FS), Bruce Friedrich (PETA), and Matt Ball (VO). It is particularly beneficial that Alex, Gene, and Matt are founders of their organizations and have intimate knowledge of its history. An exception was made regarding who was interviewed at PETA because its founder and President, Ingrid Newkirk, was out of the country and unavailable to be interviewed in January 2008. As

PETA's Vice President of International Grassroots Campaigns, Bruce was a fitting replacement. He has worked at PETA for over a decade, heading up many food campaigns and serving as a primary media spokesperson.

My interviewing methods were influenced by Denzin's (1997) descriptions of interpretive ethnography, of which interviewing is a central part. Denzin advocates for a feminist, communitarian, publicly responsible analysis with an ethical basis in the feminist notion of care, privileging emotion and political transformation instead of more patriarchal notions of duties and reason. This method envisions a more humble role for the researcher who must be open to examining herself as a mutual subject of study.

To give status to my research subjects, I treated them with respect and appreciation and attempted to provide some reciprocity or benefit to them for participating. While reciprocity does not include monetary compensation for their time, I believe my research participants enjoyed having an opportunity to share their expertise on animal advocacy and talk to a scholar who is interested in both examining and assisting their work. There are broader, social benefits as well, as this dissertation promotes a mutual goal, shared by the participants and me, of advancing protection for NHAs. While there are no major personal risks involved to the participants, the consent form did advise that when discussing their organization's communication strategies, they should choose to be as candid or as discreet as they deem appropriate to protecting their organization's privacy.

The phone interviews were structured informally. However, I followed a standard interview schedule as a useful guide to ensure all the major points pertinent to the

dissertation were consistently addressed. An informal structure utilizing many open-ended questions enabled interviewees to reject or transform my imposed assumptions to answer the questions in ways that fit their conception of the topic. In this way, I afforded the interviewees more agency to avoid conforming to my way of thinking or being limited by my framing of the issue (Patton, 2002).

The interview schedule of questions, listed in full in the appendix, asked them such questions as: What is your animal rights/liberation philosophy and how does that influence your message strategy, if at all? Explain the history of your food campaign message strategy and why you have chosen your current approach? What is the main problem as you define it in your food messages? Do you promote dietary changes based more on the audience member's self-interested or altruistic motives, and how does that choice affect their view of animals? What values do you assume the audience member already possesses, and what values do you try to promote? What is your visual strategy, and how would you like the audience to view other animals in relation to themselves? Do you believe your campaign messages are influenced more by your theories on animal rights or your theories of what works best to get people to switch their diet? I also often asked about their views on humane farming reforms or free-range farming, if it was not mentioned in their answers.

Besides providing context for the textual analysis, the participant input from these interviews applied to my normative assessments of the implications of framing choices and what types of frames may be optimal. Adding their real world experience and professional judgment to the analysis helped ground my conclusions so that I took into

consideration the expert opinions of professional activists and the challenges AROs face in the real world.

A challenge in interviewing ARO leaders who are used to being media spokespersons is to avoid receiving polished, well-rehearsed answers intended primarily to improve the reputation of their organizations or to educate the public about basic animal issues. At the beginning of each interview, I distinguished my role as a scholar from that of a reporter, and I encouraged them to feel free to provide more detailed, candid, and critical feedback than they might in a media interview. Whenever I believed their initial answers were too shallow or reserved, I gently probed for further depth to the extent that they were willing to share. To increase their ability to respond candidly and thoughtfully to my questions during the phone interview, the interviewees called me from a private space, such as in an office with a closed door. The interviews lasted approximately one hour, with Bruce's (PETA) being the shortest, at 40 minutes, and Matt's (VO) being the longest, at 80 minutes.

Description of Overall Analysis Process for Both Methods

I conducted and transcribed the phone interviews in January while I was simultaneously gathering and initially reviewing advocacy materials gathered for the textual analysis. Once I had briefly reviewed all of the ARO text to assess its basic breadth and contents, I was able to select the specific elements and pieces that I believed were most pertinent to include in this text sample in order to best answer the research questions. Then I gave all the selected print and electronic materials a closer read while taking hand-written notes based on topics in the research questions, such as problems,

solutions, values, and animal rights ideology. The note-taking on the Web sites was especially laborious due to the wealth of information and many layered pages and links they contained. I admit that spending so much time experiencing hours of video footage and hundreds of photos of animal suffering in factory farms and slaughterhouses took an emotional toll and made me sympathize with the ARO employees who deal with these issues, images, and animal victims on a daily basis.

In February I categorized all of this handwritten data into a notebook with tabs separating each ARO's text notes from the ARO's leader interview transcripts. Then I read through all the notes from each ARO's text and interviews, taking more notes in red ink and highlighting themes. Based on this third read, I typed up a separate observation report for each ARO related to themes from the research questions. Then I took the observations in those reports to begin to classify the main answers to my seven research questions, merging all the information across AROs for the first time. I referred back to the detailed notes in the notebook to extract the many specific examples used as evidence to back up my findings.

The next chapter (Chapter Five: Findings) contains the descriptive answers to the first six research questions with many examples drawn from the text and interviews based on the process described above. Then, in the final chapter of this dissertation (Chapter Six: Discussion and Conclusion), I further analyze and interpret those findings, along with answering research question seven, to explain the relevance of these findings to animal rights movement communication strategy and communication theory.

CHAPTER V

FINDINGS

This section addresses the six research questions that comprise the *descriptive* component of the dissertation depicting the framing choices of the five animal rights organizations (AROs) studied: Compassion Over Killing (COK), Farm Animal Rights Movement (FARM), Farm Sanctuary (FS), People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA), and Vegan Outreach (VO). Based on the analysis of ARO food advocacy texts and my interviews with the ARO leaders, I explain and categorize what messages and frames the five AROs communicated (especially related to ethics and values), how they communicated this, and why. While I do reflect on some of the possible implications of the advocacy messages in this chapter, it is in the upcoming conclusion chapter where most of my communication *prescriptions* appear, along with an explanation of the relationship between these findings and academic literature and theory on communication and animal ethics.

The research questions covered in this chapter include (in this order): AROs' problem frames, solution frames, promotion of values, categorization of self-interested versus altruistic values (both anthropocentric and non-anthropocentric), the influence of ethics and ideology in ARO communication choices, and the congruence between ARO messages, their mission, and animal rights ideology. Each section cites numerous pertinent examples of written and visual messages used by the five AROs I examined and

also intersperses relevant commentary from the ARO leader interviews to provide further context.

Research Question One (RQ1): Is the Diagnosis Component of Collective Action Frames Identifiable, and, if so, What Problems Are Defined by AROs and Who, if Anyone, is Blamed?

I identified four "problem" frames which I discuss in relative order of frequency and prominence: (1) the suffering of animals due to cruelty, (2) the commodification of animals as objects, (3) the harmfulness of animal agribusiness and animal products to humans and the environment, and (4) the needless killing and death of animals for food products. I follow this with a discussion of who the AROs blamed for these problems, which mainly targeted animal agribusiness for causing the cruelty and destruction and hiding it from consumers. Because consumers were largely kept ignorant, AROs only occasionally suggested consumers were culpable.

(RQ1) Problem Frame 1: Cruelty and Suffering

By far the most prominent problem frame presented by AROs is the cruelty and suffering of farmed animals (mainly in factory farms and slaughterhouses but also in free-range farming, commercial fishing, and aquaculture). When I asked ARO leaders to identify the main problem, everyone said it was the cruelty and inherent animal suffering that comes with it, with a caveat that FARM only uses this cruelty frame in its few animal-specific campaigns. Some leaders phrased it differently, such as PETA's Bruce Friedrich occasionally saying "abuse" and FARM's Alex Hershaft calling it "brutality" instead of ever using the word "cruelty." FS's Gene Baur specified that the problem was

the public's lack of awareness of how they are supporting cruelty, which will be discussed in the section on blame. But in the interview, Gene did use versions of the words "cruel" 26 times and "suffer" 12 times. Erica Meier from COK used versions of the words "cruel" less, only nine times, but said "suffer" 23 times. Matt Ball from VO used those words in the interview more often than any other leader, saying versions of "cruel" 27 times and "suffer" 33 times. ARO texts are full of visual and verbal descriptions of animals' extreme mental and physical suffering in confinement and the painful transport and slaughtering process. In the rest of this section, I provide examples from each ARO text of this emphasis on cruelty and suffering.

The covers of VO's two most popular booklets both problematize farm animal cruelty, with *Why Vegan?* saying "boycott cruelty" but showing images of happy animals, while *Even if You Like Meat* (EIYLM) says both "cruelty" and "suffering" and shows images of unhappy animals in intensive confinement. Inside both VO booklets are numerous photos and descriptions from factory farms and slaughterhouses with titles such as "Industrialized Cruelty: Factory Farming" and "Oppose the Cruelties of Factory Farming." The Web address listed on the back of the EIYLM booklet reads "opposecruelty.org." Even VO's softer *Try Vegetarian* booklet says "reduce suffering" on the front and labels its interior farm animal sections "Oppose Cruelty" and "Spare the Animals." VO's Web home page makes it clear that its goal is to "decrease suffering."

PETA's *Meet Your Meat* video introduces factory farming as "humanity's cruelest invention." Some of its stickers and leaflets emphasize pain for sea creatures, such as "Being boiled hurts!" (for lobster) and "Fishing hurts!" as well as a corresponding Web

site titled fishinghurts.com. Other examples from PETA include: the back of a turkey leaflet titled "a recipe for misery," a teen vegetarian booklet section on factory farms saying they are "hell," a foie gras leaflet titled "cruel to ducks and geese," and a major section on goveg.com labeled "cruelty to animals."

FARM has a shirt that says "Stop human and animal suffering," collateral pieces that say "Fight factory farming!" and a veal poster that says "Help us stop his agony." The tagline for FARM's World Farm Animal Day is "lest we forget their suffering." Similarly, FS has several collateral pieces that read "Stop factory farming!" and a bumper sticker that says "Boycott veal: cruelty in the crate." Its brochure *How We Treat the Animals We Eat* often uses the words "inhumane," "misery," "painful," and "suffer." FS's number one reason to go vegetarian, according to a leaflet of 20 reasons, is because "'food animals' are not protected from inhumane treatment."

COK mirrors FS's concern over lack of legal protection by saying "no cruelty toward 'food animals' on farms, no matter how horrific, is prohibited by any U.S. federal law," which is a bold quote in its section on animals in the *Vegetarian Starter Guide*. At the end of the guide, viewers are asked if they want to "support cruelty and misery," which is a common call-to-action from COK, using words such as "cruelty" and "suffering." Additionally, the cover of COK's egg brochure says "100% cruelty," and its pig leaflet has the title, "Pork: Another Cruel Meat." COK's Web site also features three reports specifically on animal suffering (in the egg, broiler, and turkey industries).

All the AROs tend to focus on the worst cruelties in factory farming, specifically the extreme intensive confinement of battery cages (egg-laying hens), gestation crates

(pigs used for breeding), and veal crates (male calves used for meat), where the animals can hardly move and the pictures are particularly pitiful, showing bars, excrement, chains (for the calves) and inflamed raw skin on hens whose feathers have rubbed off. To specifically expose these three practices, FS has a "Say No To" leaflet series as well as a video narrated by celebrity vegetarian Mary Tyler Moore titled "Life Behind Bars." COK uses images of these three caging practices in all of its seven television spots and has several campaigns dedicated specifically to the egg industry, and FARM has some "boycott veal" collateral pieces. Foie gras (enlarged duck or goose liver) is another notoriously cruel practice that is particularly targeted by FS and PETA with brochures and videos showing the emotionally and physically painful force-feeding by pipes and the resulting wounds and premature death it causes. Most communication pieces also discuss the unpleasant conditions of other types of animals, even animals who are caged less intensively but are still crowded, such as cows on feedlots, pigs in pens, "poultry" birds in warehouses, and, occasionally, fish in aquaculture. Only FS addresses lesser eaten meats like those of sheep and duck.

Immobility is frequently shown, not just animals stuck in small cages but images of birds painfully impaled by wire through the wing or neck or stuck underneath battery cages. Lame and injured birds are shown unable to get to food and water, with the explanation that their legs often cripple under their excessive weight. Mammals called "downers," who can't walk due to injury or illness, languish in pain at stockyards or are dragged by chains to slaughter.

Almost every factory farming discussion includes a description of the many painful standard procedures and "manipulations" that are performed without anesthesia, usually on baby animals. These include debeaking, branding, castration, dehorning, toe clipping, ear and tail docking, and teeth clipping. Videos allow the viewer to hear the animals squealing or crying to indicate pain.

AROs cite the high mortality rates on the farm or in transport as evidence of the animals' poor living conditions and lack of individual medical care. Dead animals are shown rotting in among the living. Videos from FS and PETA reveal workers beating to death animals who are sick or considered runts, particularly in the pork, foie gras, and turkey industries. Useless baby birds, especially males in the egg industry or females in the foie gras industry, are shown by the thousands suffocating slowly in trash bags inside dumpsters. And it is common for any section on slaughterhouses to assure viewers (sometimes with visual evidence) that many of the animals, particularly the birds, are fully conscious when having their throats slit, sometimes up to the point of experiencing scalding tanks and dismemberment. VO cites a slaughterhouse worker describing how cows often die "piece by piece."

(RQ1) Problem Frame 2: Commodification of Animals into Economic Objects

Most AROs, particularly FS, have messages that problematize the fact that agriculture treats farmed animals like economic units, or objects, instead of sentient beings who are individual subjects. For example, FS's "Sentient Beings" campaign, headed by Mary Tyler Moore, has a leaflet that states, "animals used for food in the United State are commonly treated like unfeeling 'tools of production,' rather than as

living, feeling animals." Similarly, FS's Veg for Life brochure says farm animals are treated like "mere production units." The group's farmed animal treatment brochure also uses the term "tools of production" and "commodities." It explains that "when they are no longer profitable, they are literally thrown away," providing examples of how it was deemed legal both to throw "spent hens" into wood chippers and to discard male chicks in the garbage "like manure" (the latter term was used by an egg industry lawyer in court). FS's turkey video says turkeys are treated like "production units" and are seen as "commodities," explaining why the many dying turkeys do not receive adequate vet care, as it is not cost effective. FS's *Eggribusiness* video describes the economic imperative of the industry which considers hens "production units," and displays a "callous attitude that allows sentient beings to be commodified" and permits suffering and death to be "acceptable economic losses on agribusiness balance sheets."

To emphasize the commodity status of farmed animals, FS's video on downed (non-ambulatory) animals is a powerful example of how much suffering will be accepted by the industry to maintain some economic value from the meat on dying or lame animals, as men prod the farmed animals to walk or drag them by chains into the slaughterhouse. The video narrator explains that calves may sell for "as little as one dollar but can be left to suffer for days" for that dollar. The video ends with a judgment stating "the fact that stockyards insist on getting every last dollar out of these sick animals in intolerable." A FS dairy industry video explains how "calf jockeys" round up day old "frail calves, some on the verge of death" to make a "quick buck," and shows men dragging calves by ears or legs and wheeling them off in a wheelbarrow. PETA's

Vegetarian Starter Kit devotes a whole page to a story of a downed cow at a stockyard who was left suffering all day because the staff veterinarians would not euthanize her because it would damage the "value of the meat." She was eventually shot by a butcher and "her body was purchased for $307.50."

FS and VO especially like to quote agribusiness industry representatives who explain that they see farm animals as profitable objects or machines. A popular pork industry quote (used in FS's sentient beings leaflet, some FS videos, and VO's booklets) advises farmers to "Forget the pig is an animal. Treat him just like a machine in a factory." VO's *Why Vegan?* booklet cites another popular quote from a hog farmer who concluded that "crowding pigs pays" to explain why mortality rates on crowded transport trucks were acceptable. A similar sentiment about mortality in the egg industry was explained by an animal ethics professor, Bernard Rollin, (in VO's *Why Vegan* booklet and FS videos), saying "chickens are cheap, cages are expensive."

To visually express the impersonal business of mass producing animals as food, ARO communication pieces often show factory farmed animals en masse, especially long shots of warehouses that reveal a sea of animals all looking repetitious and relatively similar. Sometimes, videos show animals, particularly birds, being dumped down ramps or onto conveyers like produce. Other times, closer shots reveal that each animal has a number above his/her crate (for pigs and calves) or a numbered tag on his/her back or ear (for cows), indicating that he/she is nothing more than a number who will soon be replaced. FS has an online profile of a cow, named Maxine, who escaped slaughter in Queens, and the text calls the barcode sticker on her back "insulting." FS removed it to

transition her from "food animal to beloved resident." Similarly, VO's *Why Vegan?* booklet titles its factory farming section "The Transformation of Animals into Food" to emphasize that life is reduced to an object. This dissertation's later section on values, in response to the third research question (RQ3), addresses how AROs negate the validity of this objectification by highlighting farmed animals' status as sentient subjects.

(RQ1) Problem Frame 3: Harmfulness of Animal Products and Farming to People and the Environment

A common approach in the marketing of vegetarianism is to use what VO's Matt Ball called, in our interview, the "three-prong" approach of problematizing the animal food industry to three main entities: farm animals, human health, and the environment. All of the AROs, except VO, still use this approach. In the interview, Matt at VO said he believes the factory farming cruelty angle is the strongest message and most apt to get some people to change their eating habits, so VO has shifted the bulk of its focus onto the cruelty frame, while it still does mention how to eat a healthy vegan diet and occasionally mentions environmental benefits (mostly on its Web site). In regard to problem framing, this means that the four other AROs devote some resources to informing the public that animal products are unhealthy for humans and that animal agribusiness is unsustainable for the environment. For example, each of their vegetarian guides and Web pages contain separate sections on health and the environment.

Human health messages from AROs tend to be about how a pure vegetarian diet can be healthy in general and often healthier than a standard meat-based diet, especially in preventing major diseases and obesity. They often cite the American Dietetic

Association's positive position on vegetarian diets. However, this is more of a *solution* frame than a *problem* health frame, but a distinction is that AROs do not just attempt to say that plant-based diets are *as* healthy as animal-based diets, they often attempt to problematize animal-based diets as *less* healthy. For example, while their health information is mostly positive, COK's *Vegetarian Starter Guide* and FS's *Guide to Veg Living* both say animal products are the "main source of saturated fat and the only source of cholesterol" for most Americans. FS links excess protein intake with a variety of common diseases as well as revealing "links between animal food consumption and many forms of cancer." Both COK and FS's guides also list the antibiotic-resistant bacteria strains that are found in animal products, and FS's *20 Reasons To Go Vegetarian* leaflet and its Guide to Veg Living also warn against "harmful pathogens like Salmonella and E. coli" as well as warning that Mad Cow Disease and Avian Influenza are "sickening and killing" people. PETA's V*egetarian Starter Kit* particularly condemns fish and chicken as "hazardous" due to toxins like mercury and arsenic.

COK's vegetarian guide contains a section on how dairy is unnatural for adult mammals, saying "our bodies treat cows' milk like an invader" and citing a Harvard study linking high dairy consumption to osteoporosis. FS's vegetarian guide also debates the bone-building myth of dairy by saying "studies suggest a connection between osteoporosis and diets that are rich in animal protein" due to calcium being leached out of the bones. PETA's vegetarian kit has similar information in a "What's Wrong with Milk?" section.

PETA is the only group that mentions sexual performance as a problem for meat-eaters. On its Web site, PETA cites a scientific study claiming that meat leads to impotence. PETA also takes a more positive approach to sexual enhancement claims by saying that a vegetarian diet helps one to be thinner and more energetic, which is seen as sexier than being overweight and sluggish. This positive association with vegetarianism and sex is endorsed through its annual "sexiest vegetarian" contests, one for celebrities and one for "vegetarians next door." PETA's *Vegetarian Starter Kit* has a page on weight loss written by a medical doctor who states that while it is possible for someone to be a fat vegan, vegetarian diets are the "only diets that work for long-term weight loss" and that "meat-eaters have three times the obesity rate of vegetarians and nine times the obesity rate of vegans."

Less frequently, human health and well-being issues linked to animal agriculture are framed to include world hunger, farm worker rights, and rural communities. These sections are not as popular and tend not to appear in printed material or videos but rather as small sections within Web sites. Only PETA, FS, and FARM address some of these health issues. For example, in the "Why Vegetarian?" section of goveg.com, PETA has separate links to "world hunger," "worker rights," and "factory farming: poisoning communities." PETA's world hunger section explains that much of the world's food, even from developing countries, is used as farm animal feed for Western diets: "instead of feeding the world's hungry, we take their grains and land to feed our addiction to meat, eggs, and milk." PETA's worker rights section discusses many ways the working class is exploited by agribusiness who provides dirty and dangerous work for low wages. PETA's

communities section claims contamination from factory farms is "destroying the heartland" and making people in the surrounding areas sick, as agribusiness is "choosing profits over people." FS has an "economy" issues link within its factory farming Web section that contains similar information on how corporate agribusiness releases hazardous pollution in rural communities and fails to bring these communities many economic benefits.

Uniquely, FARM has an entire campaign dedicated to world hunger policy reform, called "Well-Fed World." It promotes "plant-based diets" (the term used in place of "vegetarianism"), particularly culturally-specific staple-rich foods, among other social programs, as keys to reversing starvation rates as the worldwide consumption of unsustainable animal products and factory farming increases.

Regarding the environment, PETA, FS, and FARM have separate print pieces, as well as online links, specifically dedicated to framing animal agribusiness as environmentally destructive, commonly featuring photos of pipes spewing manure into cesspools next to factory farms. PETA's *Chop Chop* leaflet claims one can't be a "meat-eating environmentalist" and visually equates a pork "chop" to trees being "chopped," providing details on meat's association with global warming, pollution, excessive resource use, and damage to oceanic life. PETA's environmental link on goveg.com provides more details on all these issues and emphasizes how wasteful and destructive a meat-based diet is. It uses the analogy that for a meat-based meal, one is cutting down parts of the rainforest and dumping out water and food. Eating meat is also equated to driving a hummer instead of treading lightly on the earth.

FS's "Veg for Life" series of three print pieces all mention environmental degradation, using verbs such as *eroded, ruined, contaminated, compromised, mismanaged,* and *ransacked.* In fact, the leaflet states the number two reason (out of 20) to go vegetarian is because "much of our water and fossil fuel supply is squandered for livestock rearing." FS has a gray brochure titled "Factory Farming: Destroying the Environment," emphasizing water and air pollution and the waste of land, water, and fuel resources. It features photos of cesspools, chemical plants, drugs, and a fish kill. FS's online link to environmental issues, in its factory farming section, lists similar issues plus a section titled "Fish" that is all about the unsustainability of commercial fishing and aquaculture.

FARM emphasizes global warming as the main environmental problem of a meat-based diet, labeling its campaign "Bite Global Warming" and its Web site coolyourdiet.com. The campaign logo consists of an earth with a thin burning ring around it. FARM builds its campaign around a 2006 report of the United Nation's Food and Agriculture Organization that lists "animal agriculture" as an even bigger "culprit" to greenhouse gas emissions worldwide than the transportation industry (a fact cited in many other ARO messages). In addition to greenhouse gas emissions, FARM discusses the standard issues of pollution and inefficient use of land, food, and water resources.

(RQ1) Problem Frame 4: The Killing and Taking of Life for Food Items

This frame is less frequent, as it is overshadowed by a more common emphasis on the *suffering* involved in the life and death of farmed animals, which is distinct from

making their loss of life the problem. This section outlines examples of when killing and death were problematized for their own sake.

PETA's *Chew on This* DVD lists reasons why people should go vegetarian. Some include: "because no living creature wants to see her family slaughtered," "because no animal deserves to die for your taste buds," "because they don't want to die," and "because commerce is no excuse for murder." PETA often emphasizes in its calls-to-action how "vegetarians *save* more than 100 lives each year," which indirectly refers to the fact that meat-eating *kills* more than 100 animals a year. PETA's teen booklet twice mentions that animal deaths are premature by stating that animals are killed while young and that even animals on free-range farms "all have their lives violently cut short." A musician is also quoted saying "Why should somebody have to die if I need a snack?" and one page is titled "Bottom Line: Meat is Murder." "Meat is Murder" is a retro slogan of the animal right movement that implies eating meat is tantamount to a criminal killing, but this slogan is not used much anymore and was rarely used by PETA and never used by other AROs.

FARM has a World Farm Animals Day (WFAD) campaign whose purpose is to "expose, mourn, and memorialize the innocent, feeling animals in factory farms and slaughterhouses," and it shows visuals of humans protesting and nonhumans being slaughtered. The concept of mourning over the dead is highlighted by FARM's use of death toll statistics that are presented for each species. The term "death toll" is reminiscent of how America honors lives lost in any tragedy, like soldiers in war, ensuring that each life counts. In one instance, FARM's WFAD text emphasized the fact

that these deaths are unnecessary, saying "pointless suffering and death," which fits with a vegetarian solution that is sometimes mentioned, such as in the campaign's slogan "Saving billions – one bite at a time." Necessity was mentioned again in several of FARM's Meatout campaign postcards, saying that each vegetarian "saves up to 2,000 animals" from deaths that are "unnecessary." But, in other instances, the WFAD site shifts back to a focus on suffering, and not death, by saying farm animals should be "treated humanely." And in all of FARM's animal-oriented materials, and in most other ARO materials, the problem of cruelty is still emphasized because the deaths mourned are typically limited to animals specifically from "factory farms" rather than from agriculture in general.

COK and VO typically emphasize cruelty, but COK occasionally will use the phrase "saving animals," which implies farmed animals should be saved from death. And VO's *Try Vegetarian* pamphlet asks people to "Spare the Animal," which more directly implies people are sparing animal *lives* rather than sparing animal suffering, especially as photos of living animals are juxtaposed with their resulting meat product. The necessity of animal deaths is overtly challenged once in VO's two most popular booklets by using an animal scientist quote questioning our "right to take the lives of other sentient organisms, particularly when we are not forced to do so by hunger or dietary need, but rather do so for the somewhat frivolous reason that we like the taste of meat." Similarly, COK's video on the broiler industry says chickens are killed just to satisfy "our taste for meat, eggs, and dairy," which implies their deaths are a luxury not a necessity. COK's

section on "Frequently Asked Questions" explains that humans do not need to eat other animals to survive.

Similarly, FS's section on "Frequently Asked Questions" states people have the "choice" not to kill, as meat isn't necessary for them like it is for some other animals, and it ensures us that eggs and dairy do indeed cause death to hens and cows. In its "Veg for Life" leaflet, FS also ranks animal death as the 19th reason (of 20) to go vegetarian, saying "nearly 10 billion farm animals needlessly die every year to fuel the food industry." FS also has a recent advertisement and t-shirt that uses the phrase "End the slaughter. There are lives on the line," to emphasize that killing should cease. Conversely, FS's use of the word "life" implies the opposite of death, as in its "Veg for Life" campaign and in stickers that display the animals saying they want to live and their life depends on you. FS campaign materials to protect turkeys, in particular, often say "Save a turkey. Don't eat one." Somewhat similar to FARM's idea of mourning the dead, FS has a tribute section on its Web site that memorializes residents of its sanctuaries who have died (of natural causes) with individual stories that signify that each individual's life mattered.

(RQ1) Blame Aspects of Problem Frames: Agribusiness First, Consumers Second

I begin this section by discussion agricultural blame frames followed by consumer blame frames. AROs identified the most blatant culprit of all problems to be "factory farms," or the "agribusiness industry," as this industry perpetuates the cruelty, killing, pollution, and destruction and keeps it hidden from the public. To a lesser extent, the government and legal system is mentioned for failing to protect farmed animals, but only

a few of the AROs, particularly FS, propose that laws should be changed or that laws are part of the solution. Therefore, it seems the purpose of AROs mentioning farmed animals' lack of legal protection is primarily to make consumers feel more responsible for animal protection. Consequently, consumers of animal products are a secondary party who shares some blame, but AROs typically do not directly accuse the public of wrongdoing, as it is assumed that consumers do not know the extent of the cruelty nor do they know that animal products are unnecessary for their health.

While ARO messages sometimes blame "animal agriculture" as a whole or may specifically mention "free-range" farms as responsible for cruelty, the majority of messages verbally and visually blame "factory farms and slaughterhouses." Those very terms are inherently condemning and negative, much more so than the industry's own terms of "farms," "confined animal feeding operations," or "processing plants." Collateral materials from FARM and FS specifically tell people to fight or stop "factory farming," which is a distinctly different message than "end animal farming" would be.

Factory farming of land and sea creatures is also frequently specified as the main culprit in environmental damage, specifically in terms of causing pollution. For example, the title of FS's environmental brochure specifically blames "Factory Farming" and shows water pollution. Many times, however, meat production in general, whether via small or large animal farms, is framed as unsustainable, or less efficient, in comparison to plant-based agriculture. For example, FARM's global warming card highlights that "*meat production* causes more greenhouse gases than automobiles," and COK's *Vegetarian Starter Guide* says "*raising animals for food* is one of the leading causes of pollution and

resource depletion today." However, visuals tend to show large confinement operations rather than small farms.

If cruelty and suffering is the main problem, agribusiness is portrayed as responsible because it is greedy, callous, or just using common business sense to compete in a global market for cheap food; it cuts corners at the expense of farmed animals in order to increase profits. Explanations of the economic rationale behind the industry's mistreatment of animals is typically explained by AROs only if the communication piece has enough space, such as in videos, booklets, or online. AROs suggest that, despite the public impression to the contrary, profit-motives dictate *worse* animal husbandry not better, particularly in a global mass market. VO's *Why Vegan?* booklet begins its factory farming section by saying, "the competition to produce inexpensive meat, eggs, and dairy products has led animal agribusiness to treat animals as objects and commodities," and its home page has a paragraph that claims the industry is in a "race to the bottom for the lowest price at any cost." COK's three animal suffering reports all include the phrase "profits have taken priority over animal welfare."

To further rationalize for skeptical consumers why agribusiness causes and allows rampant animal suffering, AROs explain that poor treatment may be necessary to produce the product efficiently or improve taste. For example, AROs typically explain that ducks will suffer over-feeding via pipes to engorge their livers for expensive foie gras, egg laying hens will be "force-molted" to shock their bodies into another laying cycle, and "veal" calves will be made anemic and kept from moving so that their meat will be tender and pale. The dairy industry separates calves from their mothers after just minutes or

days so that more of their mother's milk can be sold for human consumption. Additionally, factory farmed animals raised for meat are bred to be unnaturally heavy and, therefore, more profitable. PETA's *Vegetarian Starter Kit* explains that chickens are "bred to grow so large so fast that many become crippled under their own weight or suffer organ failure," and pigs and turkeys also face similar pain due to obesity.

AROs explain that the industry typically denies individual medical care to farmed animals because it is not cost effective, so sick animals are left to die, and painful medical procedures like castration, debeaking, or tail docking go without anesthesia. Additionally, most AROs try to explain that these procedures are not necessary for the animal's health but are done only to modify the animal to fit the "frustrating" factory conditions. For example, VO's EIYLM booklet introduces debeaking by explaining, "to reduce losses from birds pecking each other, farmers cut a third to a half of the beaks off." It also cites Pollan, a food author, explaining that pigs' tails are docked to render their resulting stump "more sensitive" so they "mount a struggle" to avoid being bitten due to overcrowded conditions. Regarding tail-docking, COK's *Vegetarian Starter Guide* laments that "the industry's response is not to make conditions less inhumane."

And when animals get to the slaughterhouse, many are allowed to experience pain and suffering because "speed guides the slaughtering process not humane treatment," as claimed in a FS brochure and its video on turkey slaughter. In an earlier part of this RQ1 section, where I detail how commodification of animals is part of the problem, ARO text examples are provided explaining how mortality from overcrowded and poor conditions is less costly than providing the animals with more space and how downed animals are

left to suffer and are dragged to slaughter rather than being euthanized so their meat can still be sold.

AROs usually mention at some point in any cruelty discussion that this mistreatment is legal, as federal or state laws do not protect animals on farms, with only minimal federal protection in transport and slaughter. AROs frequently suggest that U.S. cruelty laws are inconsistently applied so that they do not protect animals on farms the way they protect the animals in people's homes. For example, COK's *Vegetarian Starter Guide* highlights this sentence: "the animals who we eat are treated so abusively in this country that similar treatment of dogs or cats would be grounds for animal cruelty charges in all 50 states." PETA's goveg.com has a unique section titled "Government Negligence" that claims government is "beholden" to industry and is "bought and sold" so that what little regulation exists is inadequate. While the government is part of the problem, it is often not the solution, with some FS campaigns being the exception. Most AROs' call-to-action is for consumers to boycott animal products as this is considered more effective than working with an untrustworthy industry and government regulatory agencies on welfare reforms.

The untrustworthiness of animal agribusiness is an occasional theme, with COK emphasizing it the most. COK's Web site lists a campaign victory against the United Egg Producers' "Animal Care Certified" logo because the FTC suggested the logo be discontinued as it agreed with COK that the logo was "misleading" consumers about animal welfare. Several COK television spots from a few years ago use the slogan "Don't swallow the lie," as the COK visuals and text expose viewers to the realities of factory

farming juxtaposed with the myth of old MacDonald's farm. A narrator says, "meat, egg and dairy industries want us to think the animals raised for food have good lives. Does this look like a good life to you?" One ad depicts what it might be like for a consumer to actually be served a "side of truth." It shows a consumer at a fast-food drive through who is horrified to hear over the speaker how the animals were raised to make her bacon, egg, and cheese sandwich.

To provide further examples of the theme of agribusiness untrustworthiness, a FS television PSA features Persia White warning consumers, "Don't believe what meat, egg and dairy industries are feeding you," and FS's *How we Treat the Animals we Eat* brochure says, "Misleading packaging and marketing deceives consumers, leading them to believe farm animals experience an idyllic life." Similarly, PETA's *Vegetarian Starter Kit* claims factory farms spend millions "trying to obscure reality with images of animals who are living peacefully in an idyllic barnyard," and its teen veg booklet is titled "What they never told you …" And PETA's goveg.com will sometimes use phrases such as, "What industry doesn't want you to know is …"

VO's home page asks people to try to visit a farm to find out "just how far agribusiness with go to hide the truth from you." The same paragraph also says, "Through slick marketing, the industry seeks to manipulate you into ignoring reality – they exist only to make as much profit from killing as many animals as possible." VO booklets quote an animal science textbook where the author asks if the industry should be "reluctant to let people know what really goes on, because we're not really proud of it and concerned that it might turn them to vegetarianism?"

While not all ARO messages overtly accuse the industry of hiding cruelty, the AROs tend to use terms such as "expose," "reality," and "truth" to insinuate that they are revealing to the public something that industry hides. For example, FS, PETA, and COK often use "undercover" video to get images. The main feature on PETA's goveg.com in February 2008 was "Shocking kosher slaughter investigation." VO booklets use titles such as "If Slaughterhouses had Glass Walls ..." and "Stories from behind the Walls" to indicate secrecy.

Because industry hides these abuses from consumers, AROs usually do not blame meat-eating consumers directly and typically use language that insinuates that consumers are caring people who are innocently ignorant of the realities of factory farm cruelty. For example, VO's EIYLM booklet says, "Hidden from public view, the cruelty that occurs on factory farms is easy to ignore," and its *Why Vegan?* booklet begins by saying, "Many people believe that animals raised for food must be treated well because sick or dead animals would be of no use to agribusiness. This is not true." When all the AROs suggest consumers eat vegetarian food and provide them with recipes and options, it is implicit that since consumers now know the truth, they should no longer be willing to financially support animal agribusiness. While AROs reserve negative and accusing messages for the industry, instead of consumers, even the AROs' many positive messages about consumers' compassion and healthy vegetarian food options suggest, by default, that consumers are guilty. These messages indirectly blame newly educated consumers for supporting animal cruelty if they continue to buy animal food products under these circumstances.

While most ARO messages appeal to the compassion of consumers and try to involve them in the *solution*, a few ARO messages are more directly accusing of meat-eating consumers as responsible parties in the *problems* of animal cruelty and environmental destruction. For example, FS's *Humane Slaughter?* video from the 1990s concludes with the sentence, "By eating chickens and turkeys, consumers directly subsidize this abuse." And FS's video *The Making of a Turkey* cuts from factory farming photos to video of consumers shopping in the meat aisle of the grocery store. The narrator says because consumers are eating turkey year-round and prefer to eat turkey breasts, farmers respond by altering the size and shape of the birds to fit consumer demands.

In addition, a FARM poster shows a cow slaughter illustration and reads "It's a filthy business. They couldn't do it without you," and its Meatout Mondays online campaign tells consumers they now have a choice whether to boycott cruelty or to turn a "blind eye." One of COK's television spots says, "When we buy meat, eggs, or dairy we support this cruelty" and shows factory farming images. VO's *Why Vegan?* brochure uses quotes from PhDs to accuse consumers of an ethical breach. One is an animal scientist who asks if, as a society, we should "know better," and the other is a quote from Dr. Carl Sagan and Dr. Ann Druyan who accuse people of "pretending animals do not feel pain" and drawing an unfair distinction between nonhuman and human animals for the purpose of being able to use them "without any disquieting tinges of guilt or regret."

PETA's *Meet Your Meat* video shows the link between the dairy and veal industries and says, "If you're consuming milk, you're supporting the veal industry" and informs viewers that "cows give milk for their offspring – not for human beings."

Similarly, PETA's *Chew on This* DVD shows raw chicken wing meat and tells viewers "this is not what wings are for," indicating that wings belong to birds for flying not to humans for eating. The DVD also includes several other direct statements on why people should go vegetarian such as: "might doesn't make right," "it's violence you can stop," "no animal deserves to die for your taste buds," and "it takes a small person to beat a defenseless animal and an even smaller person to eat one."

While most ARO messages about the environment take a positive approach to asserting the "power" consumers have to save the earth, the most accusing environmental messages for consumers come from PETA. Its *Chop Chop* leaflet boldly asserts, "Think you can be a meat-eating environmentalist? Think again!" and ends with the statement, "There's no excuse for eating meat." PETA's online environmental section explains problems and says, "Meat-eaters are responsible for production of 100% of this waste. Go vegetarian and you'll be responsible for none of it." It also uses an analogy of someone cutting down parts of the rainforest and dumping water and food down the drain for one meal and states, "that is what you are doing if you eat animals."

Research Question Two (RQ2): Is the Prognosis Component of Collective Action Frames Identifiable, and, if so, What Solutions Are Defined by AROs?

The most popular solution AROs propose is for consumers to eat fewer or no animal products, but FS also promotes humane farming reforms via government and PETA promotes some humane reforms by industry and retailers. I discuss these three solution frames in this section.

(RQ2) Solution Frame 1: Consumers Going Vegetarian or Reducing Consumption of Animal Products

The most common solution by far proposed by all AROs to redress problems with animal agriculture is for consumers to stop supporting it and go vegetarian. The word "vegetarian" or "vegan" is often used in most call-to-action sections of print or electronic materials, in many collateral materials, and as titles in prominent links on home pages (except for FS's main Web page, as vegetarian messages are more prominent in its separate vegforlife.org Web site). All the AROs offer free, full-color, lengthy vegetarian starter guides, with FARM distributing the guide printed by FS. For collateral, every ARO has at least one t-shirt that says "vegan," except for COK who uses the word "vegetarian," and the Web addresses that AROs advertise on collateral and print materials often suggest vegetarianism, such as Meatout.org, Veganoutreach.org, Goveg.com, Vegforlife.org, Vegkit.org, and Tryveg.com. Messages at the end of most print materials promote vegetarianism through listing veg Web sites with such calls-to-action as: (COK) "Choose veg foods," (FARM) "Kick the meat habit" and "Get a free veg starter kit," (FS and PETA) "Go vegetarian" or "Choose vegetarian," and (VO) "Choose to act with compassion by boycotting animal agriculture." Additionally, phrases such as "meatless meals," "meat-free," "humane choices," "compassionate choices," and "cruelty-free foods" are common.

Every ARO uses the term "vegetarian" more often than "vegan," as in all the "vegetarian" starter guides. Yet, the AROs' ultimate goal seems to be for people to adopt a "vegan" or "pure vegetarian" diet containing no animal products because all the recipes

and product suggestions are vegan, even if they are not so labeled. "Vegetarian" is a more familiar word than "vegan" and is likely less threatening because it implies consumers need not make as much of a radical dietary change (Maurer, 2002). The ARO that uses the word "vegan" most prominently is VO, as that is in its name and is the title of its *Why Vegan?* booklet. However, with the increased popularity of its EIYLM booklet and alternate Web URLs that avoid the word "vegan," the group seems to be moving away from frequent use of that word. In more scientific arguments, such as with environmental or world hunger issues, FS and FARM favor the term "plant-based" over "vegetarian," presumably as it has less political and social identity connotations.

Much of the time, AROs, especially COK and PETA, are consistent and clear in their solution for consumers to "go veg" and give up all animal products, and no group ever suggests that people switch to so-called "humane" animal products. But FS, VO, and sometimes FARM occasionally suggest less sweeping dietary changes or ask that consumers simply reduce the amount of animal foods they eat. By virtue of its "Meatout Mondays" campaign title, FARM suggests that people should be eating vegetarian at least one day a week. However, the campaign materials tend not to suggest limits and instead just promote vegetarian eating in general, using the word "vegetarian" frequently. Like FS, FARM also has a few "fight factory farming" or "boycott veal" collateral messages that may imply that traditionally-farmed animal products are acceptable. FARM's World Farm Animal Day campaign has "vegetarian" mentioned in some places online but other times it alludes to "humane" treatment and farming, so the solution for consumers is left ambiguous. In a few of FARM's postcards it suggests "reducing" meat,

but that is always accompanied with the option of eliminating meat or going veg too. But FARM overtly promotes only consumer solutions, not industry changes, as one of its vegetarian postcards explains that "attempts to improve the treatment of animals have not worked."

Besides its "Veg for Life" campaign materials, FS's messages may not specifically suggest a vegetarian solution when focusing on factory farming and stockyard cruelty. In some cases, FS suggests legal reforms to ban a particularly cruel practice, such as intense confinement systems and downed animal abuses. But it may accompany this solution with an additional request that consumers avoid factory farmed products in general or avoid buying that particular factory farm food item, such as: "never buy foie gras," "please don't buy veal," "don't eat pork from farms that use gestation crates," and "don't eat eggs from battery cage hens." This implies that it might be acceptable to eat these animal products, or any others, if they come from animals who are raised in better conditions. FS's emphasis on promoting "compassionate" choices, as with its slogan "A compassionate world starts with you," sometimes leaves the consumer with the option of determining which food items may qualify as compassionate.

VO's *Even If You Like Meat* (EIYLM) booklet takes the approach that consumers should consider *reducing* their consumption of animal products, in particular the "eggs and the meat of birds and pigs," as those animals suffer the most on factory farms. The cover suggests people "cut meat consumption in half," and it continues inside by telling readers that, "opposing factory farming isn't all or nothing" and they should "eat less meat to help prevent farm animal suffering." In this way, it avoids using the word

"vegetarian" or suggesting readers completely boycott all animal products, opting instead to ask the individual reader to just "do what you can." The primary time VO uses the word "vegan" in the EIYLM booklet is to encourage the reader to "choose an approach you can sustain. A brief stint as a vegan is not as effective as years of eating less meat and eggs." While this seems to suggest veganism is too extreme, all the recommended food shown is always vegan.

In the interview, Matt Ball of VO explained that this pragmatic, flexible dietary message receives a better reception from the average person leafleted who does not have plans to give up meat, and therefore, does not want to accept a pamphlet whose main goal is vegetarianism or veganism. The EIYLM booklet has become VO's main communication piece for leafleting over the last few years, with *Why Vegan?,* its classic leafleting booklet, being deemed a better choice to give to people who have already expressed some interest in animal issues or vegetarianism.

While not all the ARO messages are strict in promoting full vegetarianism, none of the AROs ever encourage consumers to switch to "free-range" or so-called "humane" meat, eggs, or dairy. But by default, some consumers may perceive free-range products as the obvious solution when the ARO has framed the problem as mainly one of factory farm cruelty. This perception is especially logical if the ARO does not specifically condemn or discredit free-range farming in that particular communication piece or if vegetarianism is not specifically mentioned as the preferred solution, as is the case in some of FS's factory farming materials.

To steer consumers away from any animal products, all the vegetarian starter guides (from COK, FS, and PETA), as well as VO's main booklets, and all the Web sites for these AROs, have small sections dispelling the myth that "free-range" farming is free of cruelty or suffering. These sections highlight the fact that there are no regulated standards for free-range labels, so consumers may be misled, and AROs mention that these farm animals still experience painful mutilations, uncomfortable transport, and slaughter, even if the animals might have more space while they are growing. In the slaughterhouse section of VO's *Why Vegan?* booklet, it mentions that *all* animals, even ones from free-range farms, are slaughtered, informing or reminding the reader that eating any animal product contributes to the killing of those animals.

FS and FARM both have unique sections that mention that consumers can also reduce animal suffering by choosing "compassionate clothing." FARM did use the word "vegan" sometimes while FS did not discuss it in terms of "vegan" fashion and simply called it "cruelty-free clothing." Either way, it is part of the principles of a vegan lifestyle to avoid *wearing* animal products like wool, down, or leather, as veganism is supposed to be a near total boycott of animal exploitation. FS's section in its vegetarian guide focuses on wool, down, and leather while FARM's online section also includes silk and fur, as did FS's separate booklet titled "Guide to Compassionate Living: Directory of Animal-Free Products." PETA promotes vegan clothing on its main Web page and in separate campaigns but not on goveg.com or specifically in food communication materials. COK and VO concentrate solely on food issues.

(RQ2) Solution Frame 2: Government Instituting Farmed Animal Welfare Reform Laws

Some FS campaigns demand legal humane farming reform, making federal and state governments blameworthy for allowing cruelty. In FS's video *Life Behind Bars,* spokesperson Mary Tyler Moore proclaims that gestation crates, battery cages, and veal crates "are inherently cruel and should be banned in the United States as they are in other countries." Other AROs also mention that these confinement systems are outlawed in other countries. FS's "Say No" factory farming series also calls for these practices to be banned, including foie gras. FS's Web page explains that it has worked with the Humane Society of the United States on referenda in three states to institute state-wide bans on crates for calves and pigs and is now adding battery cages. FS also asks for federal legislation to protect downed animals at slaughterhouses so the law would require their euthanasia and forbid their meat from being sold. Additionally, FS's "Sentient Beings" campaign seeks improved legal subject status for farmed animals, as has been passed in Europe, to get them "basic legal protections in the United States."

COK has chosen to request legal reform only in required welfare labeling of marketing materials for egg cartons so that marketers cannot make false animal welfare claims and customers can be informed if eggs come from caged birds. In 2007, COK successfully got the FTC to ask the United Egg Producers (UEP) to stop using its misleading "Animal Care Certified" logo, and the UEP now uses a more ambiguous logo that says "United Egg Producer Certified."

(RQ2) Solution Frame 3: Corporations Instituting Voluntary Farmed Animal Welfare Reforms

PETA has some humane reform campaigns, although they are voluntary industry reforms instead of the government regulation that FS requested. PETA has employed a long-standing campaign, Kentucky Fried Cruelty, against fast-food giant KFC to demand improved welfare standards of its chicken suppliers. Additionally, based on undercover footage of slaughterhouse employees abusing chickens on the kill floor, PETA has a "Tyson Tortures" Web site, and asks that the poultry company, Tyson, fire those abusive employees and institute a killing method based on gas rather than knives. The gassing method is supposedly more humane, partly because it "eliminates worker contact with live animals." In February 2008, PETA culminated a successful campaign getting the large Safeway grocery store chain to institute some improved animal welfare standards for its suppliers. This "Shameway" campaign specifically asked for less reliance on both eggs from battery-caged hens and meat from pigs in gestation crates. PETA's newest campaign in 2008, featured prominently on goveg.com, is to promote increased welfare standards in kosher slaughter in South America and asks people to sign a petition "urging leaders of the Orthodox Union and the Israeli Rabbinate to mandate the use of modern restraining pens and prohibit the 'shackling and hoisting' method.

Research Question Three (RQ3): To Which Values Are AROs Appealing? How Are AROs Creating Any Alignment between Their Values and Those of the Public?

When asked about values in the interview, most ARO leaders said they were not changing values as much as promoting values that the public already holds, namely

compassion and an aversion to animal cruelty. They did say that they had to appeal to people's desire for moral consistency by asking people to "extend" the values of compassion they felt toward dogs and cats out to sentient animals on farms. This may involve changing people's attitudes about farm animals (and fish, in PETA's case) so that people recognize these beings are equally as feeling as dogs and cats, essentially seeing them as a subject not object. In this section, I discuss AROs' prominent appeals to the values of compassion for nonhuman animals (NHAs), appreciation for their sentience, and moral consistency. Additionally, I discuss other values to which AROs appealed, such as: desire to improve the world and make a difference, choice, pleasurable and convenient food, belonging, life, concern for fellow human beings, honesty, American populism, naturalness, freedom, and American pride.

Additionally, based on the problem frames I described in the RQ1 section of this chapter, all AROs believe many people value their own health and environmental responsibility. This is evident because all AROs have separate sections addressing, to different extents, the health and environmental benefits of plant-based diets. Because this dissertation focuses on NHA issues and values related to humans' relationship with other animals, in answering this third research question (RQ3), I focus more broadly on those values and the values to which AROs alluded most when communicating about NHAs. Therefore, I do not directly discuss human health and sustainability values in this values section, as these are less relevant to this dissertation. The exception to this is an exploration of values related to the desire for food to be pleasurable and convenient, as

that has not yet been discussed in this chapter and tangentially relates to other values I address in this section.

(RQ3) Value 1: Compassion and Caring for NHA Suffering and Aversion to Cruelty

If cruelty and suffering is the main problem frame, and a consumer boycott is the main solution AROs propose, then it makes sense that ARO messages assume consumers are compassionate and caring toward NHAs. Sometimes they overtly declare this assumption. For example, FS's new slogan is "A compassionate world starts with you." And PETA's *Meet Your Meat* video ends with celebrity vegetarian Alec Baldwin telling viewers to think about the cruelty they have seen, to choose "compassion," and to go vegetarian as "millions of compassionate people" have decided to do. Continuing the compassionate theme, PETA's Veg101 online link states that "compassionate people everywhere are adopting a vegetarian diet."

VO's *Why Vegan?* booklet declares that making humane and compassionate choices is essential to the status of being human; it says "... we can choose to act with compassion by boycotting animal agriculture. Making humane choices is the ultimate affirmation of our humanity." COK's *Vegetarian Starter Guide* creates a good versus bad dichotomy under the title "Choosing Compassion Over Killing" by asking, "Do we want to support kindness and mercy, or do we want to support cruelty and misery?" It tells the reader that, by choosing vegetarian foods, "we can take a stand for compassionate living." COK's vegetarian eating brochure describes the millions of vegetarians as "thoughtful people."

FARM literature describes those who participate in the Great American Meatout as "caring" people who are "troubled" by pollution and suffering. "Caring" is also the adjective FARM uses to describe people who save a turkey at Thanksgiving, and one of its Meatout postcards includes the value of care in the headline, "Because you care about animals… " Similarly, FARM also mentions several times that people who speak out for farm animals on World Farm Animal Day are "people of conscience."

(RQ3) Value 2: Respect for the Sentience and Individuality of Other Animal Subjects

Built into the assumption that someone is compassionate toward NHAs is the idea that the person respects the other animals' ability to feel and does not want them to suffer. The concept of sentience, as I use it here, involves not only experiencing pain, but also experiencing emotions, thought, or consciousness. This relates to the earlier discussion, in RQ1, of how ARO messages build a problem frame around agribusiness's practice of treating farmed animals like objects not subjects. So, for that problem frame to work, AROs must appeal to people's values toward the well-being of fellow, individual, sentient subjects and ensure people include farmed animals in that group. AROs typically do not use the word "sentience," rather they tend to say "feel" or "suffer" instead. All AROs are careful to use gendered or personal pronouns like "he," "she," or "I" when referring to farmed animals instead of following the common American practice of referring to each individual farmed animal as "it."

In interviews, the AROs' leaders said they believe the American public already values the sentience and individuality of certain familiar animals, in particular cats and dogs. Therefore, every ARO includes frequent messages to ensure the public that farmed

animals are also sentient, often comparing their capabilities to those of cats and dogs or sometimes to other animals, including humans. An example of a pet comparison is FARM's vegetarian postcard, which states, "Animals raised for food are just as intelligent, lovable, and sensitive as the animals we call *pets*." An example of a human comparison is PETA's teen vegetarian booklet, which declares, "Animals are like *us*" and proceeds to describe farmed animals doing what would normally seem like "human" activities, such as pigs playing video games, hens talking to each other, turkeys playing ball, cows babysitting, and fish gardening.

FS's "Sentient Beings" campaign seeks elevated legal status for U.S. farmed animals, to be classified as sentient beings as they are in Europe. The leaflet for the campaign is titled "Farm animals have feelings too," and says these animals are "sentient beings – capable of awareness, feeling, and suffering" who "deserve to be treated with respect." This is contrasted with pictures of farmed animals in extreme confinement and quotes from industry that compares them to machines and manure.

To visually contrast the objectification of animals on factory farms, all AROs use pictures of comfortable animals, presumably rescued and in a sanctuary, often featuring individual subjects looking directly at the reader, or to a lesser extent hanging out, of their own choice, with friends of their same species. Booklets, like several vegetarian starter guides, describe the personalities of each rescued land animal and display their portraits and individual names, such as Truffles or Kari (pigs); Norman, Phoebe, and Travolta (cows); Emery, Marmalade, and Jane (chickens); and Ashley (turkey). The descriptions reveal individual personality traits, such as friendliness, talkativeness,

playfulness, and preferences for certain foods such as apples or green grapes. FS profiles individuals most frequently, as FS is the only ARO who actively rescues and provides sanctuary for land-based farmed animals, but COK and VO both include profiles on rescued, named animals in their main booklets too.

In the interview with Gene Baur from FS, he said they try to use pictures that reveal the animal's personality. In FS's *Guide to Veg Living*, one such photo shows a goose, Bing, happily spreading his wings in a pond and honking with gusto, and another photo shows a piglet, Rudy, standing proudly and defiantly in the grass with the low camera angle putting the viewer in the position of having to look up at him so that he appears larger than life. There are also quite a few examples from every ARO that use photos of farmed animals getting their faces close up to the camera as if to indicate their curiosity and friendliness.

PETA has an "Amazing Animals" section on its home page for the goveg.com site and in its *Vegetarian Starter Kit* providing information on the natural abilities of each farmed animal species: chickens, pigs, fish, cows, turkeys, ducks, and geese. The photos that accompany this information are all close-ups of contented animals outdoors. The information pages often cite scientists explaining the capabilities of each animal species in relation to intelligence, emotions, social skills, and communication, which also indicate that these are traits that the public values. Here are examples of PETA's opening sentence descriptions for each species:

> Chickens are inquisitive, interesting animals who are thought to be as intelligent as cats, dogs, and even some primates; Pigs are curious and insightful animals

thought to have intelligence beyond that of an average 3-year-old human child; Fish are smart, sensitive animals with their own unique personalities; Cows are intelligent, loyal animals who enjoy solving problems; Turkeys are social, playful birds who enjoy the company of others; Geese are very loyal to their families and very protective of their partners and offspring.

PETA dedicates more space to fish than does any other ARO, and it is the only group that talks about fish sentience in terms of intelligence and personality. It has a fishinghurts.com Web site, brochures, and collateral materials dedicated to sea animals. The other AROs who mention fish, particularly COK, FS, and VO, to a minor degree, often talk about them only in terms of an environmental issue. COK does talk about fish sentience in terms of their ability to feel pain but not in terms of personality. Erica Meier of COK admitted that her group wishes it had more resources so it could address sea animals as PETA does. According to Matt Ball, VO has purposely taken fish out of its main booklets because most people do not identify with cruelty issues regarding fish and identify more with land animals, particularly mammals. In general, mammals such as cows and pigs seem to be the most popular animals for all AROs to display, with chickens being the next most popular. Leaders at COK and VO both admit that they try to emphasize birds because of utilitarian concerns over birds being the animal species who suffers in the greatest numbers.

Some messages remind consumers, specifically, not agribusiness, that farm animals are more than food objects. For example, a COK print advertisement displays a cow's face reflected in a woman's eye and asks teen girls to, "See her as more than a

meal." FS has a new print ad featuring a close-up photo of the face of young pig named Truffles who challenges the viewer to, "Look me in the eyes and tell me I'm tasty." FS also has a sticker showing an illustration of a chicken stating, "I am not your breakfast, lunch or dinner." Similarly, PETA has several collateral materials with an illustration of a chick declaring, "I am not a nugget" and telling viewers that pigs and fish are "friends not food." When it comes to pigs, PETA reminds viewers that they have an assumed attachment to one pig as an individual subject – Babe, from the movie of the same name – using a poster that shows a piglet and reads, "Please don't eat Babe for breakfast." And the very title of PETA's popular video, *Meet Your Meat,* juxtaposes the idea that consumers can see farmed animals both as individual subjects while alive and as objects after death.

Because Americans have shown a penchant for being friends with certain species of animals, friendship toward farmed animals is sometimes used as a value by FARM, FS, and PETA. FARM has a button and t-shirt that declares, "I don't eat my friends" and shows an illustration of a man surrounded by farmed animals and a cat. FS has stickers that show a pig saying, "I want to be your friend, not your food," and, similarly, PETA has stickers declaring that pigs and fish are "friends not food." In most cases, these stickers appear to be aimed at children, as the stickers mainly use cartoon versions of pigs, and PETA includes its kid-specific Web site, petakids.com. On FS's Web site, it sometimes refers to both its nonhuman sanctuary residents and human visitors as "friends," and shows pictures of people petting the farmed animals. According to Matt

Ball, VO likes to use some photos of people posing with farmed animals in ways that would seem reminiscent of how people interact with their companion animals.

(RQ3) Value 3: Integrity, Including Moral Consistency and Pride in One's Morality

ARO leaders admit that, in order to encourage people to "extend" their compassionate values from one NHA group to another, AROs often appeal to people's desire for moral consistency and personal integrity. Moral consistency and integrity is defined here as one's actions accurately reflecting one's values and applying those values uniformly and fairly in all situations. In this case, the AROs use the logic of moral consistency as such: if people already care about the welfare of cats and dogs and do not want to see them harmed, and if farmed animals are equally sentient beings, then AROs imply that it would make sense that compassionate people would not want to see farmed animals harmed either. To show consensus for farmed animal welfare values, the vegetarian guides for FS and PETA both use survey data to prove that the majority of Americans are in favor of legal protection of farmed animals and against their intensive confinement. But a consensus clearly does not exist in favor of saving farmed animals from death and consumption, although there is consensus in America that people should not eat dogs and cats, so that is where AROs often point out moral inconsistencies in American attitudes.

Messages by FS, FARM, PETA, and COK use questions as a tool to provoke viewers to rationally justify why they eat certain species and pet others, implying it is a morally random decision who gets killed. A COK t-shirt shows a photo of a dog looking up at viewers while seated on a dinner plate with a knife and fork on either side of him.

The headline asks, "Why not? You eat other animals, don't you? Go vegetarian." Similarly, a FARM vegetarian postcard shows a picture of a cat and a piglet nose to nose with the question, "Which do you pet? Which do you eat? Why?" And PETA's online section on chickens has a photo illustration of a chicken with a cat's face and the question, "If your cat tasted like chicken, would you eat her? Why not?"

FS uses this questioning technique the most. It has a t-shirt and other collateral materials with drawings of a happy dog and cat and an anxious cow and pig with the question, "If you love animals called pets, why do you eat animals called dinner?" The intentional use of the word "called" implies that humans treat NHAs according to the arbitrary or socially constructed ways humans choose to define them, more so than how it has to be or naturally "is." The same phrasing and question is used by vegetarian actor Corey Feldman in a PSA for FS showing him petting a turkey and telling viewers that farmed animals have the same "emotions, personalities and intelligence" of the cats and dogs that are part of American families. Another FS television spot dramatizes the comparison by juxtaposing a category of animals called "friend," represented by a dog, cat, and horse, with a category of animals called "food," represented by a pig, hen, and calf. It then asks, "Why? Go veg."

VO also appeals to moral consistency, as its booklets openly talk about the need for people to widen their "circle of compassion" toward other animals to include farmed animals, as they do dogs and cats. VO's *Even if You Like Meat* (EILYM) booklet asks, "Are dogs and cats really so different from chickens, turkeys, pigs, and cows that one group deserves legal protection from cruelty, while the other deserves virtually no

protection at all?" and shows a girl holding a dog while farmed animal faces are featured in a circle around her. It concludes with a mainstream welfare appeal by saying that most people are "appalled" by farm animal cruelty, not because they believe in "animal rights," but because they "believe animals feel pain and that morally decent human beings should try to prevent pain whenever possible." In this way, the appeal is not asking for a *change* in values, since it assumes people are generally supportive of NHA welfare, but rather it asks for a more equal application of this NHA welfare value.

In a similar appeal, FS specifically uses the word "all" in places to emphasize how every animal species, including farmed animals, should be included in one's circle of compassion. A FS sticker shows a calf and encourages us to, "extend compassion to *ALL* beings," and a t-shirt shows a piglet and reads, "*All* babies need love." In many of its factory farming messages, FS's call-to-action says, "Like *all* animals, farm animals feel pain and deserve protection from cruelty."

FS, along with COK and PETA, inform the public that America's animal cruelty laws are inconsistently applied between farmed animals and companion animals. Several FS print materials simply say that farmed animals are excluded from most state anti-cruelty laws and from the federal Animal Welfare Act. COK's vegetarian guide says, "the animals who we eat are treated so abusively in this country that similar treatment of dogs or cats would be grounds for animal cruelty charges in all 50 states," and PETA's vegetarian guide claims that billions of animals are killed by the meat industry "in ways that would horrify any compassionate person and that would be illegal if cats or dogs were the victims."

To help create empathy for fish, PETA often uses moral comparisons to how humans would not perform the same cruel acts to dogs and cats that we do to fish. For example, brochures say we humans wouldn't "stab our cat or dog through the mouth" in a fishing analogy, and "none of us would drop a live cat or dog into boiling water. Why should it be any different for lobsters?" And to compare the act of eating fish to eating dogs, PETA often cites a quote from aquatic expert Dr. Sylvia Earle saying, "I wouldn't deliberately eat a grouper any more than I'd eat a cocker spaniel," based on their personalities. Also, PETA's fish brochure states, "if you wouldn't eat your dog, you shouldn't eat fish."

In the "Widening the Circle" section of the *Why Vegan?* booklet, VO takes a different approach and bases its appeal on humanity's moral progress, putting the focus on how humans value *their morality* rather than putting the focus on how humans value the feelings of other animals. It includes a quote from author Milan Kundera who accuses humanity of a "fundamental debacle" in failing "humanity's true moral test," which consists of "its attitude towards those who are at its mercy: animals." This relates to a quote several pages later in which the booklet text declares that, "making humane choices is the ultimate affirmation of our humanity."

Morality is based on notions of right and wrong. While overt use of the words "right" and "wrong" do not appear much in any ARO messages, PETA does use them in several places. PETA's *Chew on This* DVD and television spot ends with the declaration, "you know this is *wrong*" when showing factory farm cruelty. PETA has a poster series and some leaflets with headlines that state, "What is *wrong* with…" meat, eggs, or dairy.

On the poster, the solution is to "Join the Vegetarian Revolution," which is an unusual phrasing in the call-to-action that implies a moral uprising is warranted and is occurring. This moral uprising appears to be led by celebrities, so it is characterized as fun and trendy more than militant.

One of the few instances the moral word "right" is used is in the beginning of PETA's *Vegetarian Starter Kit* when it says vegetarianism is a way to "eat right" for health, animals, and the planet. Another time is in PETA's *Chew on This* DVD when it says, "might does not make right," a phrase also used by COK once in its vegetarian guide. The PETA DVD utilizes other moral language to promote vegetarianism by also saying there's "no excuse for murder," as these animals do not want or deserve to die, and that this "isn't fair." Yet fairness and justice are values to which AROs rarely directly appeal.

Any of the frames discussed in RQ1 that blame consumers for the problem of cruelty and destruction seem to be appealing to people's desire to achieve consonance between their actions and their values. Those accusing frames assume people will feel guilty about behaving inconsistently with their beliefs and, therefore, be willing to change their eating habits so they can feel satisfied with their moral integrity. PETA uses a quote from actress Natalie Portman to explain her moral reasons for being a strict vegetarian: "I just really, really love animals and I act on my values ... I am really against cruelty [to] animals." Similarly, a position paper on "Humane Meats" posted on FS's Web page says that people who are "sincere" in their concern for animals will stop eating animals, implying that, even if these people still eat so-called "free-range" meats, they are being

insincere to their animal welfare values. The position paper goes on to suggest that veganism is a path to a "deeper level of compassion," which emphasizes its use as a tool for moral development.

(RQ3) Value 4: Desire to Improve the World and Make a Difference

ARO messages indicate that people must want to improve the world and make a difference with their lives, as that may be a source of pride and even a sign of personal growth. COK's vegetarian eating brochure encourages readers to "Make a difference. Start today!" and the back of its vegetarian starter guide states in bold, "Every time we sit down to eat, we can make the world a better place." Similarly, VO's EIYLM booklet tells readers, "Every time you choose compassion, you're making a difference." In agreement, FARM's global warming online section declares, "You can make a difference at every meal." PETA's online "pledge to be veg" appeals to people who want to make things "better" and do the right thing, by having them agree, "I want to eat better, feel better and stop supporting cruelty."

To emphasize personal empowerment, FARM uses the slogan, "Stop global warming one bite at a time" to describes the "power" of our food choices and how they "matter." Similarly, FS has a radio PSA for Earthday that says listeners have the "power" to protect the earth "every time we eat" and the "power is on your plate." COK's veg starter guide and veg eating brochure agree people's diet matters to others, saying, "Our everyday food choices have far-reaching impacts that can't be ignored." The starter guide includes environmental impacts by stating that when people avoid animal products, they "take positive steps to protect our planet for ourselves and our loved ones." VO's *Why*

Vegan? booklet also emphasizes impact by saying, "over the course of a lifetime, one person's food choices affect hundreds of animals."

Note that in many of these slogans there is a time element that emphasizes the ease with which a person can make a difference through vegetarianism *everyday* because it allows him or her to improve the world "at every meal" or "one bite at a time." Eating is a mundane and convenient form of activism for those who do not necessarily want to dedicate time to being a traditional activist or do not have the money to donate to causes.

Further indicating the importance of a switch to vegetarianism, AROs often claim that vegetarianism is the "best" or "most important" thing a person can do to solve problems. For example, FS's "Veg for Life" brochure says, "eliminating ALL animal foods from our diets is the single most important step we can take to be kinder to animals, ourselves and the Earth." PETA often cites vegetarian musician Sir Paul McCartney telling readers, "If anyone wants to save the planet, all they have to do is just stop eating meat. That's the single most important thing you can do." FARM claims, "our best option to end these atrocities is to stop subsidizing them."

Making a difference is also connected with feeling good about oneself. FS's final reason (out of 20 in a leaflet) to go vegetarian is that the reader will, "feel good because you make the world better," and this is mentioned again in FS's "Frequently Asked Questions" section of the *Guide to Veg Living* by stating that vegetarians enjoy better "mental health and feel good knowing they are working toward improved health and well-being for themselves, animals and the environment." Regarding mental health, COK's starter guide's page on transitioning to a vegetarian diet is like a life coach's

personal growth plan telling new vegetarians that they have "made it!" and should give themselves a "pat on the back!" when they have successfully been a near-vegetarian for a month. In several places, it tells the readers to be patient and not to be hard on themselves if they cannot go vegetarian overnight, reminding them that, "for every animal-friendly choice you make, you're having a positive influence." Similarly, FS's veg guide page on transitioning one's diet seems to indicate that vegetarianism is worth the effort by telling readers to, "give yourself a break" if every move is not perfect, encouraging readers that "every step you take to reduce suffering, exploitation and injustice is always a step in the right direction."

(RQ3) Value 5: Choice

In this section, I isolate the notion of choice to mean that AROs emphasize how vegetarianism is not only voluntary but also the preferred or fitting choice for conscientious consumers. For example, COK's materials repeatedly use the word "choice," such as in asking consumers to "choose vegetarian." Its *Vegetarian Starter Guide* highlights "choice" in its ending call-to-action for the animal and environmental sections, titling them, respectively, "choosing compassion over killing" and "choosing sustainability." Erica Meier of COK explained that COK titled its Web page "tryveg.com," purposely using the verb "try" to emphasize choice. Almost similar to what a reporter might say of his/her goal, Erica stated COK's goal is to, "provide people with the facts so they can make a decision on what they want to support." COK believes it is particularly necessary for them to provide facts about animal agribusiness practices because the industry often misleads consumers. Erica stated:

> People in our country, they want a variety of choice. It's really the goal behind the industry – the freedom of choice. And it's actually a good tool to use against them because if they want consumers to have the choice, then they need to provide them with information that is more in line with the truth. And so we are providing them with that information, so that they can make that choice.

PETA's videos also emphasize the importance of our food choices, such as when the narrator in *Meat Your Meat* says, "Every time we eat we make a choice. Choose vegetarian," and the Tyson slaughterhouse video says, "We have a choice. We can choose cruelty to animals or we can choose compassion. Please go vegetarian." Even the use of the word "please" is a way of emphasizing that consumers have the power to choose and no force is involved. In rare cases, it is the farmed animals who plead with viewers to choose vegetarian, such as in a few of PETA's collateral materials where the farmed animals say, "please don't eat us."

COK urges consumers to use their buying choices to help farmed animals by emphasizing that the animals do not have a choice to help themselves. COK's egg brochure and its pork leaflet both say the animals, "don't have a choice – but you do." Similarly, COK has a television spot called "Choices" that asks, "Would you choose to live like this?" as it shows crated animals. Then it declares, "We have a choice. They don't." Also, In COK's "frequently asked questions" section, in response to the common argument that other animals eat each other so we should eat animals too, COK provides that distinction that humans have the "choice" not to eat animals, as it is not necessary for human survival.

Choice can also be about highlighting a lack of restrictions. FS's, FARM's, and VO's suggestions that consumers eat less meat (discussed in RQ2), instead of always recommending veganism, is another way to emphasize to consumers that it is *their* choice to what extent they wish to change their diet. And goveg.com's "Veg101" section boldly declares that vegetarians eat, "whatever we want," which is an unusually liberating phrasing that implies the choice to eat vegetarian foods is voluntary and does not feel restricting. When viewing each ARO's messages as a whole, over all their text, it is clear that the ARO believes the best choice consumers could make would be to eliminate all animal products.

(RQ3) Value 6: Pleasurable and Convenient Food

Every ARO highlights the positive aspects of vegan foods, recognizing that taste, convenience, accessibility, and variety are very important to food consumers. For example, the *ease* of the diet is often emphasized, especially by PETA, by stating many accessible options exist now for vegetarians. PETA's *Vegetarian Starter Kit* explains, "Restaurant options for vegetarian diners keep getting better and better," and "you can now find veggie burgers and other mock meats and soy milk in pretty much every supermarket nationwide, including Wal-Mart." Further emphasizing ease, it says, "It's easy to live and let live, and this guide will show you how," and "Now it's easier than ever to go vegetarian," shown in conjunction with a display of cookbooks. Goveg.com's "Veg101" section declares that vegetarian-friendly menus are "sprouting up everywhere," making it "easier" than ever. PETA's teen veg guide discusses grocery, dining, and cooking options and declares, "It's easy to be vegan." To emphasize variety of choice,

PETA writes, "There is a world of other options" as the title for its page on cruelty-free food substitutes.

Equally optimistic, COK's *Vegetarian Starter Guide* says, "Just 15 years ago, finding cruelty-free versions of our favorite foods was like a game of scavenger hunt. But today, virtually every major grocery story sells animal-free foods." One of the guide's page titles is called "Simple and Delicious: Vegetarian Dining" and another is called "The Easy Way to Transition to Vegetarian Eating." And COK's vegetarian eating brochure contains a section called "It's as easy as 1-2-3." The other AROs agree. FS's *Guide to Veg Living* says in several places, "Fortunately, transitioning to a plant-based diet has never been easier," and VO's EIYLM booklet tells readers, "exploring a meatless diet is simple."

To create a positive connotation with vegetarian foods, AROs often accompany these food messages with cheerful, bright colors such as green, yellow, and blue and include many photos of colorful, fresh produce, hearty cooked dishes, and vegan name brand products found in grocery stores. All AROs highlight the satisfying taste of vegetarian foods by using words such as "tasty" and "delicious," with VO's messages being the most understated. The recipe section of COK's starter guide is labeled, "Recipes for Vegetarian Delights" and assures readers, "Eating vegetarian foods doesn't mean giving up the tastes you love." And PETA2's teen booklet labels its recipes, "Tantalize Your Taste Buds."

FARM is also very optimistic in promoting vegetarian foods and tells readers considering signing up for its Meatless Mondays campaign to, "Have fun. Remember,

going veg isn't about restricting your diet – it's about discovering new possibilities and experiencing fresh, exciting flavors." In fact, in the interview, Alex Hershaft from FARM said the main message FARM promotes, because he has found consumers care the most about it, is "availability, taste, cost, and ease of preparation of the meat and dairy alternatives." So FARM sees itself as a marketer of vegetarian foods, trying to appeal to consumers based on the main self-interested reasons consumers choose to eat any food.

(RQ3) Value 7: Belonging (Especially to the Right Crowd) or Desire for Popularity

All AROs emphasize the growing popularity of vegetarianism, presumably so it does not seem like a fringe lifestyle or odd dietary choice. People do not want to be alone, so, by emphasizing popularity, AROs provide assurance that vegetarianism as a lifestyle and an ideal is validated by others. In actuality, some leaders admit in interviews that the percentage of vegetarians has not risen substantially over recent decades, but it is popular with certain demographics, such as women and youth. However, even if vegetarianism is not growing rapidly, the sale of vegetarian foods is.

VO's *Why Vegan?* cites a poll estimating there are two and a half million vegan adults in the United States. FS's *Guide to Veg Living* begins by assuring readers there are a wide variety of people who eat vegetarian, saying, "From former cattle ranchers to Hollywood celebrities, more and more people from every corner of America are recognizing that vegetarianism is good …" and "After years on the fringe, meat-, egg-, and dairy-free fare has earned a well-deserved place in the American food culture. To join with the millions of Americans who have already embraced vegetarianism, read on." The third page is dedicated to proving vegetarians are in "good company," as the "best

people" have gone vegetarian for ethical reasons. The page shows a variety of celebrities as well as listing moral leaders from history explaining their ethical dietary choices.

PETA's *Vegetarian Starter Kit* is the only starter guide that features people on the front, in this case, celebrities. Inside, celebrity pictures and quotations are used to demonstrate that vegetarians are morally progressive as well as healthy, attractive, and popular. Several of PETA's leaflets also use celebrity appeals and attempt to show diversity in race, gender, and age. PETA's teen vegetarian booklet contains the headline, "Everyone's doing it" on a page showing attractive, young celebrities. Goveg.com contains a "Famous Vegetarians" link on the home page that takes viewers to a page with Alicia Silverstone's picture and the headline, "Vegetarian Stars are Powered by Tofu." This gives the viewer access to headshots and quotes of dozens of current vegetarian celebrities. To further emphasize that beautiful people go vegetarian, PETA's goveg.com also hosts annual "sexiest vegetarian" contests for celebs and non-celebs.

(RQ3) Value 8: Life

The ARO frames that problematize the killing and death of NHAs, as discussed in RQ1, implicitly help to conversely express the value of life. Sometimes, "life" is directly mentioned, such as when FARM uses the word in its slogan for the Great American Meatout, with the term "Choose Life." Also, FARM's "Gentle Thanksgiving" campaign uses the word "life" several times, saying that killing innocent animals, "betrays the life-affirming spirit" of the holiday and asking viewers to, "celebrate life." FS's turkey messages also contain references to saving their lives. As previously discussed, FARM and other AROs also talk about how vegetarians save so many number of animal lives.

To promote saving life, COK uses the term "saving" prominently in its vegetarian starter guide, titling its main sections, "saving ourselves," "saving animals," and "saving the earth."

FS's vegetarian materials now all fall under the "Veg for Life" name and logo. One can interpret the word "life" in this context to mean that a healthy vegetarian diet saves the lives of farmed animals and/or one's own life. Life could also connote *time*, suggesting people should eat vegetarian for the rest of their lives. FS's main vegetarian guide titles the recipe section, "Recipes for Life," as does PETA's *Vegetarian Starter Kit*. Also, FS sells a t-shirt that has a quote by Buddha which reads, "All being tremble before violence. All fear death. All love life." In a more direct life-saving appeal to consumers, FS has several stickers showing cows and chickens with a statement reading, "She wants to live and her life depends on YOU!" The gendered and personal pronouns also indicate the animals' status as subjects rather than objects; another sticker says "he" and another is in first person coming from a cow's perspective, saying, "I want to live."

(RQ3) Value 9: Naturalness

Naturalness is a value often related to food, as in natural foods being healthier than artificial foods. And while I share a few examples of that health connotation from the ARO texts in this section, I largely highlight how AROs suggest that what is natural for animals and what is more natural or traditional for agriculture is preferred to what is artificial or industrialized, such as the genetic modification of animals and large-scale, intensive confinement agriculture.

As previously discussed in this chapter, AROs often show photos of farmed animals in a contented state outdoors in the sun, contrasted with many images of them behind bars, often in the dark of a warehouse, looking unkempt while crowded with all others on factory farms. The images, both still and film, of factory farms and slaughterhouses often display much mechanization, metal, and concrete. These images sometimes show animals dying in garbage cans and dumpsters. The feel is cold, dark, gray, dirty, and industrial. This unnatural environment is juxtaposed against the cleanliness and brightness of portraits of contented animals who have been rescued and are surrounded by the natural elements of sun, grass, sky, hay, wooden fences, and ponds. To a lesser degree, some species, particularly fish but sometimes wild turkeys, are shown in the wild.

To label factory farm images as unnatural or untraditional farming practices, VO booklets use a headline that reads, "not your childhood image," and both PETA and COK use messages aimed at youth that state, this is not "Old MacDonald's" farm. These tactics imply that viewers expect or want farmed animals to live a life outdoors or in a clean barn – a life that is closer to what would be considered "natural" for them, either natural for their species in the wild or natural for old-fashioned animal husbandry.

AROs, with the exception of FARM, often directly refer to practices, conditions, and the animals' bodies being unnatural in modern animal agriculture. For example, in a brochure, FS says its number 10 reason to go vegetarian is because, "Farm animals are usually prevented from engaging in instinctual behavior and live a fraction of their natural lives." VO's booklets cite food author Michael Pollan saying of a battery-caged

hen that, "every natural instinct of this animal is thwarted …" These unnatural and frustrating factory conditions are contrasted with the descriptions of how these species would behave in nature, as explained by several FS, COK, and PETA messages.

Many messages describe the unnatural weight that the industry demands of animals raised for meat and the artificial way the weight is obtained. In VO booklets, writer Michael Pollan explains that piglets are weaned earlier than they would be "in nature" because "they gain weight faster on their hormone and antibiotic-fortified feed" than on mother's milk. And FS's video on the turkey industry explains how farmers alter the shape of the birds to meet consumer demands for turkey breasts. The video explains that this "anatomical manipulation" has made the males so large that it is impossible for turkeys to "mount and reproduce naturally," so they must be "artificially inseminated." With a similar focus on weight, COK's *Vegetarian Starter Guide* explains how chickens and turkeys "grow so abnormally fast due to selective breeding and growth-promoting antibiotics" that they suffer lameness and organ failure. PETA's vegetarian guide describes this too and shows a photo of a crippled chicken on her back.

Many of these ARO quotes indicate the unnatural diet and medications that agribusiness uses to fatten animals. For example, PETA's starter kit uses the phrase "dosed with a steady stream of drugs" in several places when describing chickens raised for meat. And COK's starter guide tells readers that "beef" cattle are "fattened on an unnatural diet of grains and 'fillers' (including sawdust and chicken manure)." It also says that factory farmers, "artificially inseminate dairy cows every year and keep them pumped full of steroids and other hormones" to yield higher milk yields. FS's veg guide

names the dairy hormone as Bovine Growth Hormone and explains that because of it, cows today "produce ten times more milk than they would in nature." FS also mentions here that dairy cows are killed at the young age of four or five when they could live to be 20 years or more. This premature death is something that PETA has also mentioned for many farmed animal species, which could be considered an emphasis on how animals do not get to live out their "natural" lifespan when farmed.

The food itself can be construed as unnatural for humans to consume, particularly in the case of dairy. For example, COK's *Vegetarian Starter Guide* contains a section titled, "Is milk natural?" and shows an illustration of human children sucking on a cow's udder to visually answer that question with a "no." It explains how each species' milk is "intended" for its own species and that humans are the only species who drinks the milk of other species. Similarly, PETA's starter kit also says, "no species naturally drinks milk beyond the age of weaning." PETA's *Meet Your Meat* video also emphasizes how the cow naturally gives milk for her baby not for humans. Most AROs do not argue that meat is unnatural for humans to eat, with the exception of PETA once addressing it in the health section of goveg.com, under the title, "Is eating meat natural?" It argues that, among other physiological reasons, humans are not as naturally equipped as carnivorous animals to kill and eat raw animal flesh with their bare hands.

Additionally, all the environmental messages about how animal agribusiness heavily pollutes the land, air, and water seem to be based on the belief that nature is clean but can be contaminated and become toxic or ruined by humans. Environmental messages by AROs suggest that animal agribusiness is not in sync with nature. FS's

factory farming brochure cover cites the Worldwatch Institute saying, "overgrown and resource intensive, animal agriculture is out of alignment with the Earth's ecosystems." To further indicate the artificial, the brochure shows photos of medication as well as fumes coming from an agricultural chemical plant. Related to this, FS's, COK's, and PETA's vegetarian guides all mention contamination in the resulting animal products humans eat, saying how animal products are a health risk because they contain unnatural ingredients like pesticides, drugs, and other chemicals.

(RQ3) Value 10: Honesty

All the examples provide in the RQ1 section explaining problem frames that blame agribusiness for misleading consumers indicate that consumers appreciate being told the truth. COK is the ARO who emphasizes the honesty aspect the most with its campaign for truth in product labeling and its television spots, such as the one about consumers being served a rare "side of truth" at a fast food restaurant.

In an interesting twist on honesty, PETA's *Chew on This* DVD accuses adult consumers of being dishonest to children about food when the narrator says, "you shouldn't have to lie to your kids" about where their food comes from. This assumes that adults believe that the reality of farm animal suffering and death would upset kids and possibly keep them from eating meat.

One could even interpret the AROs' frequent use of referenced citations and photos as a way to emphasize that the *AROs* themselves are telling readers the truth about the conditions of factory farming and the environmental and health risks associated with animal products. Since it is clear that these advocacy materials are partisan, AROs often

cite outside experts, especially with doctorates, to prove the truth of statements in favor of vegetarianism or agricultural practices. VO is the most meticulous in its use of other experts and inclusion of detailed citations within the document. But all the vegetarian starter guides cite outside scientific sources, particularly in the sections on environment and human health, but also to prove claims of the sentience or capabilities of other animals.

(RQ3) Value 11: Concern for Fellow Human Beings

Anthropocentric altruism is particularly emphasized by FARM, PETA, and FS who all have campaigns that either fight human hunger, worker exploitation, or the polluting and health contamination of rural neighborhoods (as was discussed in more detail in the problem frames of RQ1). These frames assume people care about the health and well-being of other humans, especially innocent humans who are underprivileged and are suffering starvation, mistreatment from their agribusiness employer, or health problems due to having to live near or work in factory farms and slaughterhouses. For example, PETA's online messages declare that "profits are put before people" by government and factory farmers, so readers who are "compassionate" toward people are encouraged to go vegan to, "stop these exploitative industries and promote a world of compassion." But, in general, ARO collateral materials and popular pieces like vegetarian starter guides, while not misanthropic, tend not to emphasize compassion for humans. One exception is FARM's t-shirt that says, "Stop human and animal suffering. Go vegan!" And FARM is also the only ARO who has a campaign dedicated to human equity issues with its "Well-Fed World" hunger campaign.

(RQ3) Value 12: American Populism and the Accountability and Responsibility of Big Business and Government

This broad category overlaps with the last three values of naturalness, honesty, and concern for human well-being, as ARO messages capitalize on an assumed public mistrust for the exploitative and irresponsible tendencies of big business and, in some cases, government. This idea of American populism suggests that AROs assume people want big business and the political elite to be held accountable in cases where they take advantage of the little guy and the innocent. For example, all AROs critique modern agricultural practices specifically on the basis that it is contemptible as "factory farming," "corporate agribusiness," or an "exploitative industry," in contrast with the bucolic values that consumers may have for wholesome traditional or family farming, considered a responsible business of everyday hard-working people. Hence, the blame portion of ARO problem frames, as discussed in RQ1, tend to center on agri*business* more than agri*culture*. AROs generally do not insinuate that small or "family farms" are nearly as problematic, and in fact, never mention these types of farms in the problem frames. Factory farming, in particular, is largely to blame for why cruelty is standard, food is not wholesome, the earth is polluted, workers are exploited, and consumers are misled.

PETA and FS appeal to these populist values the most, as they both have online sections discussing the exploitation of workers and the contamination of rural communities by animal agribusiness. The implication is that industry is greedy and callous, while the public values the elite showing justice, respect, responsibility, and decency toward the common man. Yet the jobs agribusiness provides are described as

dangerous, dirty, and low-paying. PETA cites workers who explain how their bosses cheat them out of wages and worker's compensation for injuries and how they have little job security so they cannot complain. To highlight objectification, PETA quotes a farm worker saying he felt he was "disposable" and treated like a "machine," and a contract chicken farmer said she was "treated like a dog" by the industry. To further emphasize worker mistreatment, PETA shows pictures of working class people protesting and striking and describes industry as anti-union. In this section, PETA also occasionally uses trigger words for exploitation like "serfs," "slaves," and "child labor."

This is contrasted with wholesome "community" values of rural America, or the "heartland," where people simply expect basic, fair treatment from employers and a safe, healthy environment for their families and community. FS's section on the economic issues of factory farming laments the loss of family farms saying, "small farms help to create close-knit communities and thriving local economies." PETA has an online section describing the health problems faced in rural neighborhoods, which is titled, "Factory Farms: Destroying the Heartland."

PETA's sections on the polluting of rural communities and the negligence of government might also appeal to politically conservative values, especially those that mistrust the federal government. Because most AROs propose a consumer solution instead of a government solution, this could be construed as valuing the notion of personal responsibility, consumer choice, and free market capitalism. For example, PETA's page on government negligence shows a photo of the Capitol Building in Washington, DC, specifically emphasizing the *federal* government and its agencies, such

as the USDA and EPA, and not implicating local governments. And while corporations are blamed for ruining communities and making people sick, the solution is not for government to regulate industry as much as it is for individual consumers to boycott these irresponsible animal agribusinesses. Regulation is portrayed as a joke because money has corrupted the process, so individuals must take it upon themselves to right the wrong through responsible consumer choices.

(RQ3) Value 13: Freedom

While AROs frequently highlight consumer freedom of *choice* (as in value number 5, choice, previously discussed), the value of freedom I refer to here is directed at the way humans feel about themselves and every animal having freedom over their own *life* and *body*. PETA's *Chew on This* DVD says people should go vegetarian "because everyone wants to be free," meaning NHAs also want to be free. Yet, besides this example, the word "freedom" is not directly used much by AROs, but the value is implied. AROs' consistent emphasis on extreme confinement and immobility of animals in factory farms implies that AROs believe Americans will find high levels of restriction to be unsettling or unfair.

COK's pork leaflet emphasizes confinement with photos of pigs stuck in gestation crates and an analogy of how readers might feel similarly frustrated and uncomfortable being "stuck" in a car in traffic for years. It says pigs are, "unable to move freely" and "can't even walk or turn around." They are in a pregnancy "cycle" going only between gestation and farrowing crates. The word "cycle" is used by many AROs when describing breeding sows and dairy cows, as they are stuck in a cycle of re-impregnation so that they

continually produce maximum profits for agribusiness. This use of the word "cycle" connotes a treadmill where one is trapped in motion going nowhere.

Freedom is associated with wide open spaces, as in the American West, which may be why FS emphasizes *space* on its new home page in 2008, which is much less cluttered than its previous home page. FS has added much white space, a large picture of rescued animals outdoors enjoying the sun, and a strip of grass across the bottom. It no longer includes photos of factory farmed animals on its home page. Blue sky, sun, and grass are often represented in all ARO pictures of "happy" animals (who are presumably rescued from farming) to emphasize their relative freedom in contrast to the darkness, filth, and discomfort of captivity on factory farms.

Besides wild-caught fish, it would be complicated for AROs to claim that animals commonly used for food should be "free," as animals raised in captivity are domesticated and cannot survive in the wild. But FS sometimes uses the word "free" when describing how rescued animals in its sanctuary are free from pain and free to roam outdoors and enjoy life. Yet, farmed animals on the few small farms that are truly "free-range" might have similar space to those at Farm Sanctuary, but photos of these few "free-range" animals on farms are not used in ARO literature, as they would likely fail to promote the same level of contempt for captivity and agriculture as do the pictures showing animals in intense confinement on factory farms. However, viewers of ARO materials may not know for certain that the contented animals shown in pictures are not just from "better" farms, which may lead readers to immediately think of freedom in terms of any farm that does not use cages and allows animals outdoor access.

(RQ3) Value 14: American Pride

In a few cases, American pride is directly referenced through the use of patriotic symbols, such as a PETA bumper sticker that displays the American flag and states, "Proud to be a Vegetarian American." And FARM's Great American Meatout campaign specifically mentions America and uses red, white, and blue colors. One of its posters has Uncle Sam, portrayed by a cow, pointing at the audience, reminiscent of the famous war recruitment poster, saying "I want you to stop eating animals." The text emphasizes loyalty by stating viewers should join the meatout, "for your honor, for your family, for your country, and for your planet."

Sometimes the AROs give an indirect nod to American pride by suggesting the humane policies of the United States government lag behind those of other, usually European, countries. For example, COK's *Vegetarian Starter Guide* explains, "While many other countries are banning the battery cage system because of its inherent cruelty, egg producers in the United States still cram hens into small, wired cages." This strategy of comparing humane laws internationally is used most frequently by FS because it has some of the only campaigns calling for federal legal reform of industry. For example, FS's *Eggribusiness* video explains that European nations have already outlawed battery cages, so the U.S. lags behind. The narrator says, "It's time for birds to be protected from abuse in America too." And in FS's *Life Behind Bars* video, spokesperson Mary Tyler Moore informs viewers that legal protection for farmed animals in the United States is "grossly inadequate." She states gestation crates, battery cages, and veal crates should be banned in the U.S. as they have been in Europe. The call-to-action is that, as a "civilized

nation," America has an "ethical obligation" to prevent their suffering. The video also cites U.S. Senator Byrd critiquing factory farming as "barbaric" and saying a "civilized nation" must be more "humane" toward life.

Related to America's notion of itself as a civilized society is FARM's use of caveman analogies in two cases, implying that if people are still eating or wearing animals in the 21st century, they are uncivilized and undeveloped. While this could suggest that people simply have more options in modern times, it also capitalizes on Americans' views of themselves as citizens of one of the most highly-developed, advanced, and civilized nations. Perhaps ironically, it could suggest that Americans no longer behave like the *animals* that were their primitive ancestors. Similarly, FS appeals to America's pride with a t-shirt bearing Gandhi's quote, "The greatness of a nation and its moral progress can be judged by the way its animals are treated."

Research Question Four (RQ4): How and to What Extent Do Frames Appeal either to Self-Interest or to Altruism and Social Responsibility (toward Humans and/or Nonhumans)?

With this question I primarily seek to ascertain how ARO messages may or may not emphasize a concern for NHAs, instead of only humans, as the AROs' primary purpose is the protection of NHAs. I refer to these values as "NHA-centric" to differentiate them from values that are geared primarily toward humans, which I refer to as "anthropocentric." Similarly, I also wish to identify the prominence that ARO messages place on values of altruism or social responsibility toward *others,* human and nonhuman, as social movements are primarily moral movements that promote a

heightened awareness of the value of justice toward others. The opposite side of the coin to altruistic values is a focus on one's own self-interest, realizing that self-interest and altruism are not always mutually exclusive categories, as will be explained at the end of the section. When discussing human self-interest in relation to vegetarianism, the focus is usually on improving human health (such as nutrition, disease-prevention, and weight-loss), avoiding environmental risks to health, and enjoying vegetarian food.

All AROs do put an emphasis on promoting an altruistic concern for farmed animals (whether it be their welfare or their rights), primarily through dedicating much space to the topic and using farmed animal photos throughout messages. Relative to each ARO in this study, VO and COK put the largest proportion of emphasis on NHA issues, while FARM may be said to put the least. VO and COK are the smallest groups in the study, so they admit their limited resources are directed toward educating the public about farm animal cruelty rather than nutrition or environmental issues. Alex Hershaft of FARM admitted that his organization spends most of its time promoting vegetarian foods (based on human self-interest values). Yet, FARM's materials emphasize farmed animals more than Alex indicated. FS and PETA, being the groups with the largest resources in this study, have the largest quantity of communications and array of materials. Therefore, they have the space to branch out into more anthropocentric issues, yet they both, especially FS, still spend the majority of their space and efforts promoting NHA-centric values rather than anthropocentric values. For example, all their videos and the vast majority of brochures focused on farmed animal cruelty and not human health, food, or the environment.

(RQ4) Each ARO's Emphasis on NHA Altruism versus Human Self-Interest

While all AROs promote vegetarianism as a solution to proposed problems with meat and agribusiness, an important question of this dissertation asks on what values basis is this vegetarianism promoted? I primarily used all the vegetarian starter guides (of which I include VO's three main booklets) and "Why Vegetarian?" sections of ARO Web sites as pertinent sites for assessing the emphasis AROs place on self-interested versus altruistic values. In this section, I discuss each ARO in relative order of its emphasis on NHA altruism over human self-interest.

Vegan Outreach's (VO) emphasis on NHA altruism versus human self-interest. VO's three booklets, especially *Why Vegan?* and *Even if You Like Meat* (EIYLM) over *Try Vegetarian*, are dedicated to farmed animal cruelty and compassionate messages. Each booklet cover features photos of farmed animals only and uses the word "suffering" or "cruelty," which conveys that respect for NHA welfare is the main reason to give up eating meat. And VO's Web site also has chickens across its header who remain for most pages. Approximately 13 of 16 pages in *Why Vegan*? and EIYLM are focused on NHA altruism, with the self-interested health and food-oriented pages toward the back. The *Try Vegetarian* booklet takes a more self-interested approach, relatively speaking, by starting out talking about health, with only half the pages dedicated to NHA altruism. However, photos of farmed animals feature prominently on almost all its pages. VO does have a health section on its Web site and a separate *Guide to Cruelty-Free Eating* that is dedicated more to health and practical food preparation issues than its three main booklets.

Compassion Over Killing's (COK) emphasis on NHA altruism versus human self-interest. With compassion built into its name, perhaps it is fitting that all of COK's campaigns, video footage, print pieces, and television spots are dedicated to the altruistic purpose of exposing the public to the harsh realities of factory farm cruelty. Its Web site features photos of farmed animals on the header of all pages. COK's veg eating brochure has a piglet on the cover and starts with NHA-centric reasons to go vegetarian and then proceeds to health and environmental reasons.

COK's *Vegetarian Starter Guide* dedicates just over a quarter of its pages to farmed animals, with the six-page animal section coming after the three-page health section, followed by a two-page environmental section. The guide has photos of farmed animals on its cover along with fruits and vegetables. Over a third of the booklet's pages simply help people make the transition to vegetarianism with recipes and shopping tips (which is technically self-interested, but I perceive it to be more value-neutral than the health section, as preparation and access to food is more of a practical concern rather than a rationale).

Erica Meier said COK privileges the issue of farmed animal suffering but also felt it was necessary for COK to provide people with the "tools" they need to go vegetarian and maintain that lifestyle, hence all the pages dedicated toward food procurement and recipes. Also in this latter effort, COK has launched a series of city-specific vegetarian Web sites, providing tips on eating vegetarian in major cities such as Washington, DC and Portland, OR.

Farm Sanctuary's (FS) emphasis on NHA altruism versus human self-interest. FS is heavily focused on farmed animals, as it is the only ARO that actively rescues and provides homes for them. FS's Web page showcases a huge photo of sanctuary residents across the top and also portrays at least one photo of a farmed animal on each page. All of FS's campaigns, advertisements, videos, and the vast majority of its print pieces and collateral materials are dedicated to farmed animals.

FS has a leaflet called *20 Reasons to Go Veg for Life* which is evenly divided between animal, environment, and health reasons; but the animal reasons do get some premier placement as the first and last reasons listed, and the majority of photos include NHAs. Of all the reasons listed, approximately half could be considered altruistic, including all the NHA-oriented reasons and many environmental reasons. FS also has a lengthy *Guide to Veg Living*, one quarter of which is dedicated to NHA altruism, with cows featured prominently on the cover as the only photo. Pictures of named farmed animals (such as Rudy and Charlotte), sometimes shown with human companions, appear throughout the guide. The guide opens with a page of well-known people talking about their moral reasons for going vegetarian. This is followed by four pages on health before a three-page section on farmed animals, followed by a two-page environmental section, which includes a "ransacked oceans" paragraph on sea animals. Similar to COK's and PETA's vegetarian guides, one third is dedicated to practical information such as recipes, food, and tips on making the transition.

People for the Ethical Treatment of Animal's (PETA) emphasis on NHA altruism versus human self-interest. PETA uses the words "ethics" and "animals" in its name, so it is appropriate that it should focus heavily on NHA altruism. While that is largely the case, PETA probably appeals to human self-interest slightly more often than most AROs in this study do, with the possible exception of FARM. Anthropocentrism is evidenced, in part, by PETA's greater use of celebrities and photos of humans, along with its greater emphasis on the value of attractiveness (including sex appeal and weight-loss). These generally fall into the self-interested values category of "belonging" (discussed in RQ3).

PETA's *Vegetarian Starter Kit* resembles that of COK and FS, with a similar proportion of pages dedicated toward NHA altruism in the center (approximately one quarter), another quarter dedicated to human health, and virtually the rest (almost half) covering food issues like recipes and tips on transitioning. The difference is that environmentalism is reduced to half a page, and more emphasis is put on human health (like athleticism and weight-loss). Also, the cover page of the starter kit features photos of celebrities and food but never features an image of a NHA. A farmed animal does not appear in the kit until page five, while the first few pages feature nineteen photos of celebrities. However, the majority of quotes by those celebrities deal with altruistic values toward NHAs.

In PETA's "Top 10 reasons to go vegetarian in 2008," listed on goveg.com, over half the reasons are self-interested (with "slim down" being the first) and only one third of the reasons mention NHAs. But, PETA's popular *Chew on This* DVD lists thirty reasons to go vegetarian, and nearly two-thirds focus on farmed animal altruism,

especially in the last half of the video. In the middle of the video, only two reasons focus on the environment and two on anthropocentric altruism. A quarter of the reasons are self-interested (health), and they hold a prominent place, dominating the first third of the video. However, the visuals overwhelmingly emphasize farmed animals, as opposed to humans, throughout. The last NHA-centric reason viewers are left to ponder is heavily moralistic – "because you know this is wrong."

Overall, PETA's numerous food collateral materials and print pieces are almost solely dedicated to farmed animal altruism, even though PETA still follows its trend of featuring celebrities heavily in print. And its extensive goveg.com site lists "cruelty to animals" and "amazing animals" as the first and second link under the "Why Vegetarian?" section. Only the health link is wholly self-interested, while links on the environment, world hunger, worker rights, communities, and government negligence are largely altruistic (even if more anthropocentric).

Farm Animal Rights Movement's (FARM) emphasis on NHA altruism versus human self-interest. FARM is campaign-oriented rather than just having an overall "go veg" theme. Of the campaigns I analyzed, three are heavily altruistic (Bite Global Warming, Gentle Thanksgiving, and World Farm Animal Day) with a fourth (Well-Fed World) emphasizing anthropocentric altruism. Two are primarily self-interested (The Great American Meatout and Meatout Mondays). But in talking to Alex of FARM, he seems to emphasize those Meatout campaigns as being most important, as he thinks people are most influenced by self-interest. Yet, in FARM's Meatout messages, even

though they privilege self-interest (health and general food preferences), they do always mention farmed animals and environmental issues, to a lesser degree, at the end.

The "Why Vegetarian" section of FARM's Web site lists issues in order of their perceived interest to the public. The list goes from most anthropocentric and self interested (health), to anthropocentric altruism (world hunger), to altruism mixed with self-interest (environment), to NHA altruism (farmed animals). The introduction includes a statement that reflects FARM's mixed emphasis on self-interest and altruism, "Although most people are motivated by health concerns, it is important to realize that dietary choices have much broader implications for planetary survival." In the introduction, it blames animal agriculture for its role in causing the "biggest problems facing America and the rest of our planet," namely "disease, hunger, environmental devastation, and death."

(RQ4) Environmental Messages, both Altruistic and Self-Interested

Each ARO includes messages dedicated to environmental values, with VO using this appeal the least. Environmental values are considered both self-interested and altruistic because of human's ecological interdependence with the natural world for survival. The question is: which is emphasized more in environmental messages of AROs, human self-interest or altruism? For example, when messages focus on the well-being of nonhuman species, such as wild animals and rainforest or ocean ecosystems, this is more altruistic. But when messages focus on domestic pollution and its human health risks, these are more self-interested. While it is an inexact science to separate these mixed

messages into two distinct categories, my overall assessment is that ARO environmental messages are both self-interested and altruistic but might lean more toward altruism.

PETA's environmental messages imply altruism when they suggest people should not eat animal products because it causes so much waste, inefficiency, and pollution. For example, the *Chop Chop* leaflet focuses as much on inefficiency/waste as it does on pollution and includes a section on the destruction of ocean life and deforestation. Also, the "what you can do" section online has this altruistic message, among others: "Switching to a vegetarian diet reduces your 'ecological footprint,' allowing you to tread lightly on the planet and be compassionate to its inhabitants." However, PETA's teen booklet appeals more to self-interest by placing a visual emphasis on risk, featuring toxic icons, a polluted stream, and a barren landscape. It also shows a gas pump, which signifies expense and security in today's political climate.

Almost all of FARM's print materials briefly mention environmental protection. Plus, FARM has a dedicated environmental campaign built around global warming that also addresses all aspects of environmental devastation. The campaign includes a poster, t-shirt, postcard, and online section. All feature the earth logo, which humbles humans and emphasizes their mutual status with all other living beings on the same planet. While these materials contain self-interested messages, particularly around pollution issues and the effects of global warming, they do mention the protection of ecosystems and wildlife. For example, the poster says meat production "kills more wildlife than all other activities combined." The online, "What You Can Do," section includes the altruistic statement that viewers should go veg for "the Earth and ALL its inhabitants."

FS's environmental messages are altruistic but include self-interested values slightly more often than other AROs, mainly because it includes some of the local worker and community health risks within the environmental section (which is anthropocentric altruism). Toward anthropocentric values, FS's environmental brochure emphasizes pollution, mentioning "tainting drinking water" and the "health threats" and "respiratory problems" of air pollution, particularly for those people living near factory farms. It further emphasizes human health risks by showing pictures of medicine and a chemical plant in conjunction with a paragraph on "toxic drug residues" in meat. However, it includes a comment on how these chemicals also put wildlife populations at risk, and it discusses "dead zones" next to a photo of a wild fish kill. The paragraph on "leaking lagoons" explains how cesspool leaks often sicken both humans and "native animals and plants."

FS's environmental section of its vegetarian guide emphasizes the urgency of the need for dietary change based on the largely self-interested reason that otherwise "the valuable resources on which our lives depend will continue to be eroded, depleted and polluted beyond repair," but most of the messages following this highlight risks to *both* human and nonhuman populations. And toward NHA altruism, the "ruin on the range" paragraph includes threats to endangered species and the killing of "wild animals" by the government to protect ranching interests. The paragraph on "ransacked oceans" also emphasizes aquatic species extinction, killing of "bycatch" animals (privileging the deaths of mammals and birds), and aquaculture damage to aquatic ecosystems.

COK's vegetarian guide's environmental section is evenly split between self-interest (pollution and toxins) and altruism (efficiency and ocean biodiversity). Toward self-interest, it says the air and water we use are polluted and ends by saying humans should protect the planet "for ourselves and our loved ones." In favor of altruism, the section is titled "Saving the Earth" and shows a clearcut forest, a bee on a flower, and a photo of a man trying to free a giant tuna caught in a driftnet. Additionally, in the paragraph on fishing, it explains, "local ecosystems are destroyed, devastating animals and plants."

(RQ4) Anthropocentric Altruism

I discussed appeals to anthropocentric altruism in RQ3, in the sections covering the values of "concern for fellow human beings" and "American populism." To summarize, of all AROs, PETA puts the most emphasis on altruism toward other humans in its extensive goveg.com site that discusses rural communities, workers, and human hunger. But these issues are not highlighted elsewhere, such as in PETA's print pieces. FS has a small section on rural communities in the factory farming section of its Web page and occasionally mentions hunger and worker issues in other materials. FARM is the only ARO to dedicate a whole campaign to human hunger, but it does not have a domestic focus on rural communities or worker issues. When considering all ARO messages as a whole, anthropocentric altruism is dwarfed in comparison to the emphasis on NHA altruism and even, to a lesser degree, anthropocentric self-interest.

(RQ4) Mental Health and Morality: How Self-Interest Overlaps with Altruism

The idea of altruism is not always devoid of self-interest, as was mentioned by several ARO leaders in the interviews. For example, Matt Ball of VO called the choice between self-interested and altruistic appeals a "false choice" because, by appealing to people's ethics, you *are* appealing to people's own self-interest. He said being vegetarian

> adds to people. It's not about "I've given up meat. I've given up cheese. I've given up eggs, and I suffer through the day because I don't have these things." It's really something that can be a very positive thing for an individual. It can really add to the meaning of their life – to their ethical satisfaction – to their fulfillment as a person.

In basic terms, doing good makes one feel good about oneself, and AROs often mention this mental benefit to the public in conjunction with moral messages about how their vegetarianism prevents animal cruelty or environmental devastation. I discussed the ARO emphasis on the mental benefits of ethical vegetarian choices in the RQ3 section under the values of "making a difference" and experiencing "moral integrity." In contrast an emphasis on going vegetarian for health reasons, as opposed to moral reasons, does not present as much opportunity to involve altruism and is essentially based on self-interested values.

Research Question Five (RQ5): How Do Organization Leaders Explain Their Framing Choices, Particularly in Terms of Ethics and Ideology?

This section's information came from interviews with each of the five ARO leaders: Erica Meier of COK, Alex Hershaft of FARM, Gene Baur of FS, Bruce Friedrich

of PETA, and Matt Ball of VO. They are all referred to by first name followed by the ARO abbreviation in parenthesis. Their responses are often categorized into two communication ethics approaches of deontological and utilitarian. Deontological is defined as means-oriented, and these communication choices are based more on animal rights ideology/philosophy, with messages assessed according to truthfulness, representativeness, importance, and/or sincerity with animal rights ideology. Utilitarian is defined as ends-oriented, and these communication choices are based more on what will presumably work most effectively to create the desired end result of helping NHAs the most. These two decision-making styles do not always contradict each other, as sometimes the most effective (utilitarian) message is also the most ideologically authentic (deontological). In this analysis, it is challenging to separate animal ethics from communication ethics, as they are not mutually exclusive categories and both include deontological and utilitarian aspects. The intention for RQ5 is to privilege *communication* ethical choices regarding how to present animal issues to the public.

Findings reveal that, overall, most AROs use a blend of deontological and utilitarian communication approaches, especially in their choice to privilege NHA concerns over human concerns, but they often lean more toward utilitarianism, particularly in their choice to privilege animal welfare over animal rights, as the former is more widely appealing. This section first discusses leader motivations for choosing NHA-centric appeals versus anthropocentric appeals. Then, their decision-making rationales within the NHA-centric appeals are discussed, such as which NHA species

they privilege, how visuals are chosen, and whether or not they choose to emphasize animal welfare or animal rights.

It is interesting to note that many of the ARO leaders interviewed made voluntary references to *Peter Singer, Tom Regan, utilitarianism, deontology,* and *pragmatism* without my prompting or including those specific terms in my questions. This speaks to the appreciation and/or understanding that these ARO leaders have for animal ethics and ideology, even though they may choose to campaign for animals based on different means.

(RQ5) Motivations for AROs in Choosing Whether to Appeal to Concerns for NHA Altruism or Human Self-Interest

VO and FARM are admittedly the most utilitarian in communication choices, even though they use different messages in pursuit of the same end result of encouraging people to go vegan or reduce their consumption of animal products. Matt (VO) believes that many people, especially youth on college campuses, care about animal suffering, so VO emphasizes an animal cruelty message with this target group because he believes this message is "strong" and powerful enough to inspire some readers to actually change their diets. Matt thinks a self-interested health or environmental message may initially create more "agreement" about the need to change or greater willingness to "consider" the message, but it is ultimately not "strong" or compelling enough to spark such a significant change for most people. He explained a distinction in VO's communication goals, "We don't want people to listen. We want people to *change*."

To disprove the myth that self-interested appeals are more effective, Matt (VO) cited other health statistics, such as the obesity epidemic or smoking, to prove that people will continue to consume or do unhealthy things even when they know it may harm them. He also feels the public will not believe an animal protection group's claims that all animal flesh is unhealthy over the medical community's claims that chicken and fish are generally okay to eat. In addition, Matt stated, "a plurality of people who are vegan cite *ethical* reasons, animal issues, for being vegan," and they tend to be more committed to the diet, while many people who claim to be "vegetarian," but still eat some chicken and fish, cite *health* as their main motivation. Therefore, VO chooses to primarily appeal to altruism toward NHAs instead of human health. This is done for utilitarian reasons but is also deontological for an ARO, making it both pragmatic and authentic.

Of all ARO leaders, Alex (FARM) had the most utilitarian viewpoint, as well as being the most pessimistic in terms of his beliefs about what motivates people and how they feel about other animals. He believes that most Americans think of other animals as "resources," with the exception of cats and dogs in many cases. Therefore, Alex thinks concern for animals is less influential at getting most Americans to change their diets than higher priority reasons such as the "availability, taste, cost, and ease of preparation of meat and dairy alternatives," concern for their own health, and concern for the environment (listed in order of how he perceives their influence). Notice that his list of perceived motivating factors goes from most self-interested at the top to most altruistic at the bottom. He says FARM emphasizes self-interested reasons such as the "attractiveness of vegan foods" over more altruistic reasons because appeals to self-interest are more

likely to work when asking consumers to make a change as "fundamental as what they consume three times a day." Alex clarified, however, that if he is simply asking for a donation, an altruistic appeal on behalf of other animals may work better, but in requesting that consumers make a larger "sacrifice," such as "changing life-long habits," he does not think altruism is a strong enough appeal.

No other ARO leader said his/her group used primarily self-interested appeals, as the rest prioritized animal cruelty messages, which is more of a deontological communication approach than FARM's, considering the main function and concern of all these AROs is NHA protection. Gene (FS) did admit he thought the health argument was probably the most convincing at getting people to go vegetarian. Yet, despite this belief, FS still uses concern for farmed animals, not health, as its main message because he says FS is trying to appeal to people's "hearts." Therefore, FS's communication decisions are more deontological than utilitarian in this aspect. Even though the end result in both the content of FS and VO is similar in their emphasis on NHAs, FS's choice is more influenced by deontological or ideological concerns than is VO's.

(RQ5) Motivations for ARO Choices in Emphasizing Animal Welfare or Animal Rights and Other Decisions within NHA-Centric Messages

Choosing to emphasize animal welfare or animal rights. Despite FS's deontological motivations, as mentioned in the last section, Gene (FS) claimed that FS "marries" ideology and utility in its overall message strategy (essentially blending deontological and utilitarian approaches). For example, within the spectrum of animal altruism appeals, FS, like most AROs, is more utilitarian in its communication decision to

reach people "where they are;" Gene (FS) believes most people already care about animal welfare, so he does not seek to move them to animal rights but rather asks them to simply "evolve" to expand their welfare concerns out from companion animals to farmed animals. This aspect of the communication decision is utilitarian in that it is easier and probably more immediately effective not to challenge people's basic beliefs about animals to a great extent, so one get better results in acceptance of one's message.

In their altruistic appeals, I would describe every ARO as utilitarian in this same respect of choosing not to challenge people's basic speciesist worldviews and simply to appeal to people's existing, mainstream animal *welfare* concerns about animal suffering and cruelty, as it is perceived as an easier or more obvious route to gaining acceptance for one's message than is an appeal to animal *rights*. Gene (FS) said, "I don't think there's a conflict, really, between the values that we're promoting and the values that most people hold," which he described as "humane" and "compassionate." He said, "We hope to tap into that sentiment and encourage people to act in ways that are consistent with their values, and most people want to see themselves as compassionate." Similarly, Bruce explained PETA's choice to tap into the public's existing desire not to cause cruelty to animals:

> Everybody I've encountered in my speaking with people about animal issues is opposed to cruelty, so it's really just a matter of helping them to understand that their own food choices, if they are eating meat, are out of integrity or out of compliance with their basic values.

Most ARO leaders use the word "evolve" or "extend" to suggest that the main change in attitude that needed to happen was for Americans to transfer their existing animal welfare concerns about companion animals over to animals who are used for food.

While ARO leaders do think that most Americans believe farmed animals (except for fish) feel pain and do have some basic emotions, leaders think that most people simply have not considered farmed animals as sentient individuals in the same way they consider dogs and cats sentient; this is largely because the American public is not typically asked to think about it, as farmed animals and factory farming are purposely kept out of sight and out of mind. Therefore, these AROs make it their job to get the public to "open their eyes" (a popular phrase used in the interviews) and consider farmed animals and the role consumers play in animal suffering. Gene (FS) said, "We want people to question the status quo – to question if what we are doing to animals is appropriate." He said FS is challenged to "encourage people to be somewhat introspective," and "that's a hard thing to do because people have to do that on their own and we want to provide the, sort of, the nudge that gets people looking internally and looking honestly at their own behavior."

To accomplish this, most AROs, with the exception of FARM to some degree, use a two-pronged message strategy designed to both (1) raise public awareness about farmed animals as sentient beings in comparison to other familiar nonhumans like dogs and cats, and (2) inform people that these animals used for food are suffering greatly, especially in factory farms. Gene (FS) explained:

> In order to protect something or somebody, it is very helpful to know and understand that something or somebody. A big part of FS's message is that these are living, feeling beings and they suffer just like your cats or your dogs might suffer. So we try to make it *relevant* for people that way. That they are currently being abused in mass and it's just, just, just … wrong.

Choosing visuals of NHAs. FS, COK, PETA, and VO follow this strategy of persuading people of farmed animals' sentience and individuality and simultaneously informing them how much these animals suffer in agriculture. Often leaders say this is accomplished with a combination of two types of visuals (1) showing happy photos of contented animals displaying their "personality" (per Gene) and just being "who they are" (per Erica), and (2) showing sad or graphic photos of animals suffering in factory farms. For the former "non-abuse" visuals, Erica (COK), Gene (FS), and Bruce (PETA) all said that they chose photos that allowed viewers to look into the faces, and particularly the eyes, of the farmed animal. Gene (FS) said, "animals' eyes, like humans' eyes, can often times say a lot, and looking into the eyes can provide a real connection." In an attempt to create a connection in viewers' minds between the similar sentience of farmed animals and companion animals, Matt explained that VO likes to use photos that show people interacting with or petting farm animals, so "people can see pictures of people in a way that looks like a person with their cat or a person with their dog, but it's with an animal that they are generally used to eating."

When choosing factory farm photos, Gene said he wants the photos to "touch people viscerally" and "to, I don't want to say shock but, to expose the realities of factory

farming." Bruce (PETA) said he wants those factory farm photos to create "empathy." Erica said COK uses confinement photos more than slaughter photos because she thinks the public can better "relate" to being confined than they can to being slaughtered. She hopes these confinement images might facilitate people "putting themselves in that situation or seeing their dog or cat" in a crate. Matt said VO makes utilitarian decisions about using factory farm photos that are "powerful" enough to be affecting without being so "gory" that people will avoid reading the booklet:

> We don't want to pick the goriest pictures to give people more of an excuse to write it off as propaganda, but we don't want to tone down our message so much that even the people that say "I can't look at that" will look at it because it takes away too much of the power of the message – the reality of what goes on in factory farms. We are trying to be somewhere in the middle that will influence the most number of people.

Matt said this idea of settling "in the middle" of the visual spectrum is done for the utilitarian purpose of creating "the most change per dollar spent in an hour spent leafleting."

While all AROs believe they are showing the public the "reality" and "truth" of what goes on in factory farms, Bruce (PETA), Alex (FARM), and Matt (VO) specifically mentioned visual honesty in the interview. Bruce said PETA's images are "a *representative* sample of the abuses that are standard." Alex said FARM used, "whatever works. I mean as long as it doesn't distort the *truth*. We focus on whatever we feel would

catch us more attention." So, FARM's utilitarian visual strategy is tempered by the deontological concern of truthfulness. Matt emphasized truth more than drama for VO:

> We're trying to use pictures that *honestly* represent what goes on in factory farms … We don't want to go for gore for gore's sake. We want to have pictures that are *defensible* in terms that this is the *reality* of what goes on – this is standard practice – and not have people think that it is sensationalized propaganda.

Choosing which NHA species to emphasize. Ethical choices are also reflected in the decision of which species to highlight. For example, most AROs avoid talking about fish as sentient beings, although they usually address sea animals to some extent, such as making fishing and aquaculture an environmental issue. AROs choose the latter approach for utilitarian reasons, as there is not mainstream public acceptance that fish even feel pain, much less have personalities. PETA is the only group who is willing to tackle this challenge in actively promoting fish sentience, including personalities, making PETA the most deontological ARO on this issue. Yet, all AROs believe fish are sentient and are killed for food in greater numbers than land animals, so from a deontological communication standpoint fish should be prioritized. Erica (COK) laments that her small group does not have the resources to emphasize fish as much as they would like and admires PETA's efforts. And while I did not ask Gene (FS) specifically about fish, I believe FS has the partial excuse that they do not rescue aquatic animals, so fish are not their priority.

Matt admitted that VO makes an intentional compromise on the fish issue because even though VO's goal is to reduce animal suffering as much as possible, Matt thinks

people will dismiss VO's message entirely if they see an animal welfare appeal toward fish, as that requires a larger attitude or values change than most people are willing to make. So, VO now largely avoids fish messages for utilitarian communication reasons because it may compromise its success at getting people to stop eating land animals. And in keeping with its utilitarian communication and animal ethics goals, VO has begun to prioritize the welfare of factory farmed birds and pigs, as Matt believes they suffer in the greatest proportion and numbers of all land animals. Therefore, VO's materials feature many photos of birds and pigs and ask people especially not to eat eggs or the meat of birds and pigs.

Matt explained that the decision to emphasize birds is still a compromise in possible effectiveness because the public tends to relate most with mammals, such as cows and pigs, so it is harder to get public acceptance of welfare messages aimed at birds (but he says birds still rank higher than fish). He explained that because birds make up the vast majority of land animals killed (in part because they are smaller than mammals), VO does not want to emphasize mammals just to gain greater reader acceptance and risk increasing the trend of people giving up red meat and switching to poultry. Erica (COK) has made this same observation and also prioritizes birds for this reason.

In some ways, the focus on birds can be considered deontological and the marginalization of fish can be seen as utilitarian. AROs sacrifice some wider public acceptance of their message in favor of attempting to save the largest number of animals from suffering (birds). This is a balancing act, and risk, that COK and VO are willing to take on behalf of birds (due to their vast suffering), but are less willing to take on behalf

of fish (despite their equally vast or greater suffering) because of utilitarian concerns that the risk would not pay off with fish. However, COK does include a few fish messages, so it is not as concerned as VO that mentioning fish will turn people off the whole idea of ethical vegetarianism. In utilitarian fashion, Alex said FARM more frequently uses pictures of pigs and cows than birds.

Choosing whether to compare human and nonhuman animals. All of the ARO leaders believe there is a similarity between humans and other animals, as they agree we are all animals, but when every ARO leader was asked whether promoting similarity between humans and other animals was part of their strategy, only Bruce (PETA) and Gene (FS) said it was. Bruce (PETA) said, "For the same reason you wouldn't eat a human being, you shouldn't be eating a dog or a cat or a pig or a fish." Gene (FS) said, "Inherent to our message and to our mission is the recognition that the other animals have feelings and value and interest in their own right." Alex said FARM only "tangentially" promotes similarity between humans and nonhumans in messages conveying that we all have the right to have our basic needs met, and "the most fundamental need is the need to live." Because promoting similarity between humans and nonhumans challenges the accepted human/animal dualism and seeks greater changes in attitudes from the public, it can be seen as a deontological approach. None of the AROs actively promote or privilege a similarity between humans and other animals in the advocacy materials I study in this dissertation.

Choosing whether to include welfare reform messages. Bruce (PETA) and Gene (FS) explained why they include a "reform" message (reforming industry or laws), and

Erica (COK) and Alex (FARM) explained why they did not. Erica (COK) expressed concern that consumers want to "justify eating meat" by choosing free-range products or generally assuming the animals on all farms are relatively "happy." To explain the industry's role in facilitating this "misunderstanding" so that consumers think animals are treated humanely, Erica said:

> It's something that the industry is recognizing as extremely lucrative, so a lot of the messages that the industry are starting to use like the happy cow campaign and in the egg industry the animal care certified and Oscar Meyer has kids singing songs about how great it is to be a hotdog. I think that the industry is recognizing that more people in our society are seeing the truth about factory farming, so they are trying to appeal to their emotional side as well by saying "oh it's okay. These animals are all happy." And a lot of people are buying into that.

Alex (FARM) agreed, and he thinks reforms by AROs are counterproductive from a utilitarian standpoint because they might work to ease this consumer guilt so people can continue eating animals:

> When they advocate bigger cages and an occasional ray of sunshine for these animals as they continue being raised for food, they are providing the medicine, the band-aid, the aspirin that the socially conscious consumers are desperate for in order to keep perpetuating the problem of eating animals.

Alex (FARM) also expressed a deontological take on this issue, more unusual for him, that AROs should be sincere and consistent in promoting their belief that animals should

not be used for food. He believes reforms are "counterproductive" coming from animal rights groups because it:

> Gives the impression that we approve of the use of animals – exploitation of animals – for food as long as they are treated a little less reprehensibly. We feel that welfare reforms is something that the animal exploiting industry should be introducing to try and entice the consumer, the socially conscious consumers, to consume them.

Gene (FS) agreed that ARO messages should make it clear that industry reforms do not make industry "good" and that reforms are not better than veganism, but he still argues that a mix of welfare (legal reform) and rights (veganism) messages can work at the level of strategy, even if he admitted they are somewhat contradictory at a philosophical level. He said that, philosophically, FS is an animal rights organization, but "from a broader strategic standpoint and broader messaging standpoint the movement exists more on a continuum. Not one block of rights people and one block of welfare people." Pragmatically, he thinks, "Welfare folks often times gravitate towards and evolve toward rights folks and a rights position over time," so FS's legal reform messages are a "practical near-term approach," while FS's vegan messages work on a "broader societal cultural shift that has to happen that goes beyond laws."

Gene (FS) sees humane farming reforms pragmatically as "incremental abolition," as "steps in the right direction" meant "to abolish certain cruelties in a hope that we eventually create the humane vegan world we dream of." In reform messages, FS capitalizes on popular welfare sentiments, arguing that factory farming practices are

"cruel" and "outside the bounds of acceptable conduct in a society that values compassion." To explain FS's approach to both welfare and rights messages, he said:

> The welfare reforms are often times seen as soft within the animal movement. When it comes to welfare stuff our messaging is hard. Ban the crates. Ban this. Ban that. But when it comes to the rights, which within our movement has tended to be more strident, we put a little soft edge on that and encourage people to adopt a vegan lifestyle. So that is kind of how we have taken those two aspects of our movement to try to kind of marry them.

Bruce (PETA) uses both utilitarian and deontological logic to explain why it makes sense for AROs to promote "less abusive production,"

> Both from a pure animal rights, Tom Regan, perspective, if you say, "How would I want to be treated if I were that animal?" obviously you want to have the worst abuses eliminated. And then, of course, from a utilitarian standpoint, it seems to move us further toward a world that we are envisioning to treat animals not as badly.

To explain why his last point is utilitarian, Bruce argued that there are higher rates of vegetarianism in countries where "there's more consciousness and more 'humane' production," as humane laws help raise people's awareness about farm animal suffering, so more people might then withdraw their support. He stated, "We do have to get to a point where people say, 'Yes, chickens shouldn't be caged. Yes, pigs shouldn't be crammed into crates' in order for more people to make a choice not to eat animal corpses at all." However, previous comments from him and other leaders suggest Americans

already believe intensive confinement is cruel and, therefore, wrong. So, one could argue that getting rid of the worst cruelties will not *change* consumer attitudes or behaviors, which is perhaps why he claims that regardless of consumer attitudes, legal reforms are better for the NHAs who exist in agriculture. This latter point is deontological, but his former point is utilitarian in arguing that humane laws help raise the issue of farmed animal cruelty for public scrutiny and that increased awareness and exposure may lead to increased vegetarianism.

Simplifying animal rights ideology. Overall, AROs, especially COK, FS, and PETA, often simplify their deeper animal ethics philosophies to create communication strategies based on more shallow or popular ethical sentiments. Therefore, a relationship exists between theory and strategy, but it is just partial or more at a surface level. Recall Gene's (FS) earlier comments about how he thinks messages do not have to be either animal rights or animal welfare and they exist on a "continuum." Despite being a rights organization, FS's messages tend to avoid using the word *rights* in favor of the word *compassion* because the latter represents a convergence between animal rights and welfare:

> The word "compassion," I think, is very important in the animal movement and we need to, in my view, it is a strong word and it embodies what our movement should be about. And it's not divisive within our movement like rights versus welfare has become.

Similarly, Bruce explained that PETA prefers to focus on promoting compassion and to "stay out of the more academic utilitarian versus deontological versus whatever you want

to call Gary Francione's ethic discussion." While Bruce thinks all animal rights groups agree with the basic premise of PETA's mission that "animals are not ours" to use as resources, the focus of the ARO's work and messages should be on the "issues" themselves to end that use of animals. He said, "PETA tries very hard to focus on 'brass tacks' issues rather than to get mired in any sort of philosophical disputes." This fits with his belief that the public also agrees that much of the animal cruelty, in practice, is wrong. In favor of utilitarianism, Bruce said PETA will work with any group who is "trying to make the world a kinder place" even if they do not share the same ethical philosophies in all aspects.

COK also simplifies philosophy in its messages by making the whole popular idea of being compassionate toward NHAs "simple" for the public to practice toward farmed animals, in particular, as its messages highlight the *ease* of ethical vegetarianism. Erica said COK's goal is "to encourage people to *simply* stop eating animals" and to "make the idea of not eating animals a mainstream issue – to bring it to the forefront, make it a household term, make it *accessible* to people, make them realize how *easy* it is to simply stop eating animals." In order to help make it mainstream, she said COK has gravitated toward providing more practical guidance on *how* to be vegetarian and not just ethical rationale on *why*. "We are now trying to offer the general public a pragmatic view of *how* they can take steps to help animals," Erica said. "We try and offer tools, not just providing them with *reasons* why they should be vegetarian or vegan."

Separating animal rights ideology from strategic communication. Rather than simplifying philosophy, some AROs separate their ethical philosophies, to some extent,

from their communication strategies to focus on whatever works best. The latter is especially true for FARM's and VO's utilitarian strategies. Alex explained that FARM's motives differ from its strategies: "Well, our message strategy is always determined by our audience … But our motives are to – those of bringing justice and fairness to the rest of the animal kingdom that we have been exploiting so ruthlessly." He admitted that the two are separate with the statement, "If we appeal to their self-centered interests by talking about the desirability of vegan foods, it has nothing to do with their view of animals." I also see this as an admission of the limitation of this food-oriented strategy in helping animal rights overall. Even though Alex (FARM) believes the value of animal rights movement is that it improves us humans so that we are "more sensitive to the suffering of others," he still does not advocate dedicating much time to emphasizing an empathetic message or trying to promote animal rights because that requires more resources than his group has. He explained, "We feel that that's too difficult an issue for a small organization to tackle. So we really don't try to change American values visa vi animals."

Alex (FARM) also clarified that even with its one campaign that emphasizes altruism toward NHAs, World Farm Animals Day (WFAD), it is more informative about welfare issues than it is transformative about rights. Alex said it only affects "their views of the *treatment* of animals. It's not their views of animals themselves." He even dismissed the strategic value of WFAD by saying, "We don't feel that World Farm Animals Day really does as much to advance our goals as some of our other campaigns, but we just do it out of a sense of obligation." This latter statement clarifies that WFAD is

deontologically motivated, but the fact that he perceives it as less effective reflects his overall utilitarian priorities.

Another utilitarian, Matt (VO), explained that the differing animal ethics philosophies of he and his co-founder, Jack, do not have to be perfectly in sync in all aspects, as VO focuses on where they "converge" with each other and with the views of the public – on the issue of suffering. This is similar to Gene's (FS) and Bruce's (PETA) comments on public consensus that cruelty and suffering is wrong. Matt (VO) explained:

> We don't have to come to an agreement of what animal rights or animal liberation is between us because the bottom line is that there is so much suffering that it doesn't really matter if you're a deontologist or a utilitarian.

Matt said VO does not present information to the public "in terms of animal rights" nor is it "based on philosophy." "We're not trying to have people agree with Tom Regan or Peter Singer," he explained. "We're trying to reduce the amount of suffering as much as possible." In support of his utilitarian emphasis, his message is "based on what we've found over the years that has been effective at creating the most amount of change in people's habits." Essentially, VO does not feel it needs to persuade people about ethics but rather just provide them with consumer "information" about factory farming that will likely offend the moral beliefs they already hold, as most people have an "inherent rejection of cruelty." He explained, "Our message is more a matter of *presenting information* – the reality of factory farms – to people so that they can see these things and make an *informed choice."*

Research Question Six (RQ6): Are Each Organization's Frames Congruent or Incongruent with (or Representative or Unrepresentative of) its Organizational Mission and Animal Rights Ideology (versus Animal Welfare Ideology)?

In this section, I discuss each ARO (in alphabetical order) in terms of mission and ideology. First, each ARO's mission statement is deconstructed to elucidate its meaning and implications, particularly in relation to expressing ethical philosophies about other animals, and that is compared to the meanings elucidated in its advocacy messages. The implications of those ARO advocacy messages are then discussed in terms of how much they relate to and support an animal *rights* philosophy in opposition to an animal welfare philosophy, as outlined in the animal theory chapter. The notion of "animal rights" used here is broad enough to include deontological and utilitarian animal ethics, as made popular by Regan and Singer, and includes as key components: the deconstruction of the human/animal dualism, a non-instrumental view of other animals, and non-speciesist values.

Compassion Over Killing (COK)

Mission: "Working to end animal abuse, COK focuses on cruelty to animals in agriculture and promotes vegetarian eating as a way to build a kinder world for all of us, both human and nonhuman."

COK's use of the verb "end" in it its mission denotes a strong conviction to animal protection without compromising for a mere "reduction" in abuse, which fits with COK's stance to promote veganism and not industry reform. Animal cruelty is mentioned as the focus in the mission, and cruelty is often a term that is the focus of COK's

messages. The use of the broader term "animal agriculture" instead of the more specific term "factory farming," indicates a more sweeping inclusion of *all* farmed animals, even those on so-called "free-range" farms. This fits with COK's animal rights stance against promoting free-range animal products, but it is somewhat less representative of the terms used in its messages, which more often specify factory farms.

The mission says COK promotes "vegetarian eating," which is true in a broad sense of the word or according to a "pure vegetarian" connotation, but it would be more accurate to use the specific term "vegan." All COK's food promotion is vegan, but it tends to purposely use the broader and more mainstream term "vegetarian," presumably because it is more appealing and familiar to the public than the word "vegan." The mission's phrase, "kinder world," defines COK's vision or goal and makes vegetarianism the solution and path to that goal. This fits with COK's messages, which often emphasize notions of "compassion" and "kindness."

The mission's specification that kindness should be for "all of us, both human and nonhuman," implies a commonality between all animals and includes a place for nonhumans in the circle of compassion. The term "nonhuman" is in accordance with animal rights, but an opportunity was missed by not using the word "nonhuman *animal*," to clarify that humans are also animals, which would have further unified humans with other fellow animals. However, this verbiage is reflective of COK's terminology in its messages. While it never openly perpetuates the human/animal dualism by using problematic phrases like "people and animals," it also never openly acknowledges humans' status as an animal. For example, when COK refers to animals, it often specifies

which type with specifics like "farm animals" or "companion animals" but never a "human animal." When messages do not specify and simply say "animal abuse," the audience is supposed to assume that they mean *non*human animals, which perpetuates the mainstream idea that "animal" never includes humans. And while the mission uses the term "nonhuman," the text rarely does.

COK messages also tend to highlight the similar status of companion animals and farm animals much more often than they highlight the similar status between human animals and farm animals as fellow sentient beings. This tends to be more indicative of an animal *welfare* approach that does not challenge the human/animal dualism but, instead, simply tries to break down divisions between categories of NHAs who are valued differently. But it is useful that COK builds the status of NHAs as individual subjects with personalities and desires. While COK does occasionally include fish in its cruelty section and mentions their sentience in terms of pain, it would be more supportive of animal rights to include references to fish individuality and build a subject status for them, as it does for land animals, as it would challenge the mainstream marginalization of fish sentience. In support of animal rights, COK messages, like all AROs, are careful to use gendered pronouns and avoid the objectifying terminology of "it" when describing a NHA.

COK focuses much attention on NHAs and the cruelty they endure on factory farms as well as to the promotion of a vegan diet, which is sincere to its mission and to animal protection in general. While COK's vegan messages support *animal rights goals*, because its rationale is largely specific to the worst cruelties on factory farms, its

messages are more supportive of *animal welfare beliefs*. It misses an opportunity to emphasize a rights rationale that no animals should be used or kept in captivity as a food resource, regardless of how much or little suffering is involved or how secretive or candid the farm industry is about its practices. Additionally, while COK's name mentions "killing," its emphasis on cruel treatment implicitly makes husbandry the problem more so than killing.

Farm Animal Rights Movement (FARM)

Mission: FARM is a "public-interest organization advocating plant-based (vegan) diets to save animals, protect the environment, and improve health."

To begin with the terms "public-interest" and "advocating" admits advocacy but immediately puts the emphasis on advocating on behalf of a *human* public. While this does reflect FARM's message emphasis on human health and food preferences, it does not reflect its animal rights *motivation*. Conversely, the order of the listed rationale for veganism does reflect FARM's animal rights motivation by listing "save animals" first, but it does not reflect its messages that usually list NHA issues last and human issues first.

The mission statement is clear that FARM's goal is to promote "plant-based (vegan) diets," which is specific and accurate. It is interesting that FARM uses the more clinical and less political term "plant-based," but then combines it with the more political and "extreme" term "vegan." Both terms are used in FARM's literature, but "vegetarian" and "meatless" are used more frequently.

It is interesting that FARM recently changed its name from "Farm Animal *Welfare* Movement," which it had for decades, to "Farm Animal *Rights* Movement." The new name is an accurate reflection of FARM's animal rights philosophy and its stance of promoting vegetarianism instead of industry reform. However, the decision to more openly espouse animal rights in its name seems contrary to the increasing move away from an emphasis on animal rights or ethical messages to more benign and noncontroversial messages about the attractiveness of plant-based foods. I argue that FARM's flexible messages, such as Meatless Mondays, that sometimes fail to suggest a complete boycott of animal products in favor of simply eating less meat, are a type of "reform" message aimed at *consumers* to partially reform their diet. A more dedicated animal rights message would call for a total boycott of animal products, even if it acknowledged the practical need for a gradual transition period.

In support of animal rights, FARM has collateral materials that show a man exclaiming, "I don't eat my friends," as he surrounds himself with farmed animals. This helps the public see other animals as fellow individuals with personalities. Otherwise, FARM does not typically personalize nonhuman individuals or highlight capabilities of each species as all the other AROs did. But it does follow the popular ARO pattern of promoting the similarities between farmed animal and companion animal sentience to ask for moral consistency in avoiding eating any NHA, while it did not often compare NHA sentience to that of *humans*. But FARM does avoid objectifying NHAs with the pronoun "it" and sometimes includes fish, not only in its environmental sections, but also in its animal cruelty sections, which implies sea animals should be considered on par with

other animals in welfare concerns. FARM's animal death toll statistics carry a disclaimer, saying the lives of marine creatures go "uncounted" by the industry. But photos of fish are scarce, and FARM materials do not discuss their sentience directly.

FARM's World Farm Animals Day (WFAD) campaign contains both rights and welfare messages, as it implies some "people of conscience" are going vegetarian, while others are just demanding humane treatment. The WFAD emphasis is specifically on factory farm cruelty, in most instances, yet it does also emphasize death with its memorialization rhetoric and death toll statistics. Also, it mentions that these deaths are "unnecessary," which helps to more strongly condemn them. Additionally, FARM often comments in other places how many "lives" a person can save if he/she goes vegetarian or avoids eating turkey at thanksgiving. FARM was also the only ARO to use a peace and nonviolence message, with its "Choose Peace – Choose Veg" card featuring Gandhi. This emphasized nonviolence towards humans first and then nonhumans second.

There was only one place where FARM's message overtly perpetuated the human/animal dualism: its WFAD t-shirt says, "Stop human and animal suffering. Go vegan!" This is ironic, as the message intends to unify humans and nonhumans based on their common sentience and mutual benefits gained from a vegan society, however, the language states humans are not animals. While FARM does not typically overtly exclude humans from the animal category, it is similar to COK in its casual use of the word "animal" in other places, such as "save animals" or "protect animals" or "land animals," indicating the common use of the word "animal" to imply only nonhumans.

Overall, FARM's messages are not cohesive, since they are separated into many different campaigns and seem to communicate some contradictory or mixed messages. For example, they occasionally espouse a more strident animal rights view and a meat boycott but, more often, focus on human self-interested values unrelated to NHA issues and allow a more "flexitarian" eating approach. Yet, FARM is the only ARO that has a collateral piece that said "animal rights," as it did on its cause awareness bracelet. FARM mentioned NHA issues more often than would be expected, based on Alex's insistence that it prioritizes human self-interest values over altruism toward other animals.

Farm Sanctuary (FS)

Mission: "FS works to end cruelty to farm animals and promotes compassionate living through rescue, education, and advocacy." Additionally, FS's vision statement is: "FS envisions a world where the violence that animal agriculture inflicts upon people, animals, and the environment has ended, and where instead we exercise values of compassion."

This mission has some similarities with COK's in its use of the strong verb "end" to solve the problem of "cruelty" to all "farm animals." Compassion is promoted as the solution in the mission and vision. However, the phrase "compassionate living" is ambiguous, from a dietary standpoint, since vegetarianism goes unmentioned in both statements. Instead, the mission mentions, "rescue, education and advocacy," which is representative of *its* main actions but not specific to what the *public* should be doing. FS's newly designed Web site in 2008 is also more vague about vegetarianism than it

used to be, and a viewer has to search a while before running across the term "veg," which does not appear on the home page, whereas it does on all other ARO sites.

FS's vision statement defines the problem as "violence" from "animal agriculture." "Violence" is a strong word with negative connotations, in support of a moral position against killing, but the word "violence" rarely appears in FS messages, as the word "cruelty," from the mission statement, is more commonly used. It is useful, from an animal rights standpoint, that the mission and vision do not limit themselves to critiquing violence from factory farms only, even though most of the messages directed at the public do emphasize factory farming over just "animal agriculture." It is representative of FS's three-prong approach to framing issues that the vision mentions ending violence toward "people, animals, and the environment," although it would be more representative if NHAs were mentioned first because FS normally puts them first, although, sometimes, human health is privileged. It is problematic that the vision statement separates "people" and "animals," perpetuating the human/animal dualism in a prominent statement that appears on the home page. Overall, the mission and vision seem designed to appeal to mainstream American values and play it safe by avoiding any trigger words that might indicate FS's animal rights stance.

FS places a lot of emphasis on farmed animals and their sentience. Because FS rescues farmed animals, it is well-equipped to communicate the personality and individuality of farmed animals, using gendered pronouns (and gendered names) instead of the objectifying "it." FS helps the public see these animals as it sees them – as companions and fellow sentient beings. Like most AROs, FS especially highlights the

similarity between the sentience and capabilities of farmed animals and dogs and cats, much more so than the similarity between human and nonhuman animals. FS will use vague terminology such as "like all animals …" but it never openly espouses the belief that humans are animals.

Perhaps because FS does not rescue aquatic animals, such as fish, they are rarely mentioned in its advocacy materials. When they are, it is in the context of environmental issues, which does not highlight their sentience or individuality. And, even then, the text privileges the lives of sea animals who are more popular with the public, such as turtles, sea birds, and marine mammals. This does not ask people to change their view or values related to fish, specifically.

As with all AROs studied, FS's materials emphasize cruelty at factory farms and slaughterhouses. FS also emphasizes downed animal abuse at stockyards. While other AROs problematize cruelty as a rationale for the public to become vegetarian, FS also uses a cruelty frame to promote legal reforms of industry, such as banning gestation crates, veal crates, battery cages, foie gras, and the use of downed animals in food. Banning the worst industry practices is a more logical and direct solution to confinement and cruelty than are consumer boycotts. However, humane reforms are generally regarded as an animal *welfare* campaign rather than animal rights. Sometimes, FS's factory farming messages are separate from its vegetarian messages, which might lead viewers, in these cases, to assume they should switch to free-range or so-called "humane" animal products. Or, it might lead viewers to believe that they do not need to make any dietary or consumer changes, as the industry can solve the problem. While FS's online

position papers on humane meats and welfare reforms explain its animal rights and pro-vegan stance, its more widely-distributed literature is not usually that explicit.

In discussing agricultural practice, FS often uses critical verbs, such as "exploited" and "used," which imply an animal rights critique against using other animals as a resource. Toward this end, FS emphasizes how agribusiness puts economic interests over animal welfare to clarify the industry's "commodification" of subjects into objects. Also, in support of animal rights, it does place some emphasis on promoting life over death rather than just problematizing suffering only, as explained in the RQ1 section on "killing and taking of life for food items." However, in one of its older slaughter videos, the narrator says, "there's no excuse for killing animals this way," instead of saying more specifically, "there's no excuse for killing animals." There are a few places where FS specifically mentions that killing animals is unnecessary, such as in its new advertisement, "End the slaughter; there are lives on the line," which is a moral condemnation of killing that goes beyond husbandry and welfare issues.

People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA)

Mission: PETA is "dedicated to establishing and defending the rights of all animals. PETA operates under the simple principle that animals are not ours to eat, wear, experiment on, or use for human amusement or for any other purpose."

PETA is the only ARO in this study who deals with animal rights issues beyond agriculture, as is clear from this mission statement. PETA's mission lists the problem of eating animals first, which is representative of PETA's emphasis on the topic. Technically, PETA's actual mission statement simply explains the issues and activist

tactics it uses, but Bruce Friedrich suggested this principles statement included above is what it typically "presents" as its mission.

In this statement, PETA openly describes itself as an animal rights organization, which most AROs do not do, or at least not as candidly. However, it rarely mentions "animal rights" in its food messages, but it does use moral language, such as "wrong," more than other groups. PETA's mission *is* its philosophical principle. Its anti-instrumental view that "animals are not ours to eat" or "use for any other purpose" is directly in accordance with an animal rights ideology that does not view other animals as property. PETA does not have to use the word "vegetarian" here, as it is clearly implied. PETA does not often mention the terms "resources" or "property" in its messages, as it tends to focus on "cruelty" instead. But, like FS, it will use critical verbs such as "used for," "exploited for," and "killed for" to condemn the agricultural practices of animal use, exploitation, and killing.

Some of PETA's messages about cows used for dairy and hens used for eggs include stronger anti-instrumental language than it typically uses when describing the factory farming of other species. Possessive pronouns are used to signify that the animals own "their" milk and eggs or "their" calves, chicks, or mothers, along with the implication that consumers are stealing from them. Consider this statement: "Male calves are torn away from their mothers within hours of birth so that the milk that nature intended for them can be used by people instead." And, in an unusual ecofeminist-inspired statement, PETA says female animals are, "manipulated for their reproductive functions."

PETA is the only group to use the critical word "murder" in a few of its messages, as it is an overt condemnation and criminalization of the practice of killing. In further support of an animal rights position, PETA sometimes mentions "life" and lives "saved" by vegetarianism (see the RQ1 section on the problem frame of "killing and taking of life for food items"). However, Bruce described PETA's main message as having always been, "eating meat supports *cruelty* to animals." Because Bruce believes people already oppose cruelty, this message is more in line with a welfare position than a rights position that emphasizes death or killing.

Often in conjunction with a cruelty message, PETA highlights the sentience and subject status of farmed animals, especially in its collateral materials and "Amazing Animals" section on the Web. PETA includes aquatic animals in these sections and does more to promote a change in attitudes about fish than any other ARO by far. While many AROs choose to promote sentience by introducing readers to one rescued individual, PETA more often describes the overall capabilities and attributes of the species. This has the advantage of giving nonhumans the implied respect of a "wild life" species and does not risk belittling their dignity with a "cute" description similar to that of a pet. But it has the disadvantage of not being able to explain individual personality traits and create a stronger connection between the reader and the NHA. Additionally, this approach relies on heavy use of scientific studies to "prove" animal sentience, which, ironically, tacitly supports animal research, a practice opposed by PETA and animal rights ideology.

Like every ARO, PETA often compares farmed animals to dogs and cats, which does not challenge the human/animal dualism. But it also compares farmed animals to

humans more than most AROs do, which highlights their similar sentience but may not admit humans are animals. Perhaps surprisingly, only this one statement openly admits humans are animals: "*Like humans and all animals,* cows …" On a few occasions, PETA actually contradicts this, perpetuating the human/animal dualism with statements such as "animals are like us," "people and animals," and "meat doesn't just hurt animals; it hurts people too." And like many AROs, PETA sometimes uses the word "animals" in a way that implies the standard use of the word to exclude humans but might not mean this. This often happens when listing the three standard reasons why someone should go vegetarian, such as "for yourself, animals, and the planet" or "for your health, for animals, and for the Earth." It does not state "you" are not an animal, but it implies animals are in a wholly different category, which does not openly challenge the human/animal dualism as much as the phrase "other animals" would.

Vegan Outreach (VO)

Mission: VO is "dedicated to reducing animal suffering by promoting informed, ethical eating," and "VO is working to expose and end cruelty to animals through the widespread distribution of our illustrated booklets, *Why Vegan, Even If You Like Meat,* and *Compassionate Choices,* along with our follow-up *Guide to Cruelty-Free Eating."*

VO is the only ARO to use "vegan" in its name, and up until 2008, it used to be part of the mission statement. Recently it changed part of the mission from "promoting a vegan lifestyle," which implies animal rights, to the more open phrasing "reducing animal suffering by promoting informed, ethical eating," which implies animal welfare.

VO used to promote the word "vegan" and that strict diet more actively in its literature before the *Even if You Like Meat* (EIYLM) booklet became more popular than its *Why Vegan?* booklet. The fact that the mission problematizes animal cruelty is highly reflective of VO's messages. The verb "expose" expresses VO's contention that the meat industry hides the cruelty from the public, while the verb "end" expresses an optimism and strength that could imply a vegan solution. However, VO's messages have softened to promote "reduction" at least as much as boycotting or ending support of cruelty. For example, I analyzed VO's old booklet, *Try Vegetarian,* for this dissertation, but VO recently updated it with the new title, *Compassionate Choices*, that does not openly state vegetarianism.

The word "outreach" in VO's name is highly reflective of VO's methods of simply reaching out to as many people directly as it can with its limited budget. This focused strategy is reflected in its mission through the phrase, "widespread distribution of our illustrated booklets." The public is then solely charged and empowered with solving the problem of cruelty by reducing or eliminating use of animal products. In keeping with VO's open mistrust of animal agribusiness and its more covert animal rights motivations, it does not ask industry to reform, as some consumers might expect based on a cruelty argument. Some consumers may then seek the more obvious personal solution that they should simply support less cruel farms, such as "free-range," but VO includes a small section explaining that animals still suffer on "free-range" farms too. While there is a slaughterhouse section in most of the booklets, in general, *suffering* is emphasized as the problem more than the killing or use of farmed animals, so the messages lean more

toward animal welfare. Even the statement in *Why Vegan*? that, "veganism is best viewed as a tool for reducing suffering," implies veganism is primarily motivated by an animal *welfare* philosophy not rights.

In fact, VO's messages do not ask anyone to support animal rights, and they admit in EIYLM that most people are concerned about factory farming because "morally decent" humans should "prevent pain" (a welfare perspective) not because these moral humans believe in "animal rights." While this is likely a truthful reflection of public sentiment, it does not ask people to evolve toward an animal rights viewpoint and can be interpreted as marginalizing it. But while VO's text does not promote rights, it does highlight some citations by others who more actively support rights or bring up ethical issues in general, so moral concepts toward other animals are prominent.

VO helps the public recognize the sentience of farmed animals, and like COK, it highlights birds more than most AROs. It includes a profile of a rescued bird in the main two booklets. VO sometimes compares farmed animals to dogs and cats to highlight their similar sentience for the purpose of getting people to widen "the circle of compassion" to include farmed animals too. However, fish are not included in any booklet but do appear in an online section as a subset of the transport and stockyards section. VO mentions fish the least of all AROs, as Matt admitted he thinks its inclusion might cause people to disregard the whole booklet, which fails to challenge the mainstream marginalization of fish nor highlight them as sentient beings.

VO's comparisons of farmed animals to humans are rarer than comparisons to other mammals and birds. These comparisons fail to imply that humans are animals,

except in the case of a quote by Carl Sagan that actively challenges the human/animal dualism. But the VO text never uses false phrases such as "people and animals." In several places, VO uses the humanist phrase, "making humane choices is the ultimate affirmation of our humanity." While this supports altruism, it is problematic because it implies that humans are the only ones who make ethical choices, reinforcing a mainstream belief in human moral superiority. But overall, VO is similar to COK in keeping the emphasis on the suffering of factory farmed animals and humans' ethical consumer choices related to their mistreatment.

Summary

The six research questions addressed in this chapter describe the results of the textual analysis of ARO advocacy materials as well as the interviews with ARO leaders about the motivations and strategy behind their advocacy decisions. Findings for RQ1 revealed that AROs framed the problems with animal agribusiness and animal products as: cruelty to farmed animals, commodification of farmed animals into economic units, harm to humans and the environment, and the unnecessary killing and death of animals. The problem frames typically blamed animal agribusiness, especially factory farms, rather than directly blaming consumers. For RQ2, solution frames almost always suggested that consumers should switch to eating a total or largely plant-based diet, but FS and PETA also had solutions for humane reforms to industry.

In response to RQ3 on values, the study revealed that AROs made prominent appeals to the values of compassion for nonhuman animals (NHAs), appreciation for their sentience, and desire for moral integrity and consistency. Other values included:

desire to improve the world and make a difference, choice, pleasurable and convenient food, belonging, life, concern for fellow human beings, honesty, American populism, naturalness, freedom, and American pride.

For RQ4, values were categorized into altruistic versus self-interested. AROs often did promote altruistic values, particularly toward NHAs more so than toward humans, in keeping with their missions. But PETA, FARM, and FS also had messages promoting anthropocentric altruism, such as fighting world hunger, farm worker exploitation, and the polluting of rural communities. VO and COK were the AROs that placed the most emphasis on altruism toward NHAs, while FARM did so the least, instead, often using appeals to human self-interest, such as health and food preferences. Environmental arguments from the AROs included a mix of appeals to human self-interest and altruism. AROs sometimes combined human self-interest and altruism by highlighting the mental benefits consumers can gain from practicing moral consistency through helping animals and the planet by eating vegan.

RQ5 dealt with unearthing ARO leader motivations in how and why they construct advocacy messages as they do. In general, AROs leaders explained that they use a blend of deontological and utilitarian communication approaches, especially in their choice to privilege NHA concerns over human concerns, as many ARO leaders think NHA frames are both ideologically significant and pragmatically compelling. Matt (VO) and Alex (FARM) were the most utilitarian, even though the former uses a NHA-centric appeal and the latter a human self-interest appeal.

When making decisions about how to construct NHA-centric messages, most ARO leaders often leant more toward utilitarianism, particularly in their choice to privilege animal *welfare* over animal rights, since the former is more widely appealing. Bruce (PETA) and Gene (FS) explained their, largely utilitarian, choice to promote humane farming reform, which was deontologically opposed by others, such as Alex (FARM). Every ARO, except PETA, made the utilitarian decision to marginalize fish, assuming the public is less sympathetic to fish. But COK and VO made the deontological choice to privilege birds over more popular land animals, such as pigs and cows, because birds suffer in vastly greater numbers. Overall, COK, FS, and PETA often *simplified* animal rights ideology into a "shallower" package that creates greater public consensus around notions of compassion or welfare instead of rights. VO and FARM tended to *separate* animal rights ideology and motivations from their communication strategy decisions, using a utilitarian philosophy of framing messages based on what works best to achieve animal protection goals.

For RQ6, each ARO's messages were discussed in terms of their congruence with animal rights ideology and the ARO's mission. While there were always ways in which ARO messages supported animal rights, especially in showing respect for farmed animals' subject status and promoting veganism, messages were often conservative, such as avoiding direct mention of animal rights or an overt challenge to the dominant human/animal dualism.

The next chapter provides a discussion on the implications of these findings for communication theory and the animal rights movement. A normative component is added

that includes recommendations for how AROs could increase the ideological integrity of their food advocacy frames so that they more directly support animal rights ideology and promote frame transformation.

CHAPTER VI

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

Introduction

Whereas the previous findings chapter comprised the *descriptive* portion of the dissertation analysis, this discussion chapter provides the *prescriptive* or normative portion. Here I discuss conclusions and implications concerning the AROs' existing framing choices in terms of communication theories and animal ethics. I then discuss what general frames and communication strategies I conclude would be the most supportive of animal rights ideology, particularly in support of frame transformation. This chapter ends with sections on the study's contribution to communication theory and praxis as well as its limitations.

To summarize my perspective on the frame alignment process, much of which was explained in the introduction and communication theory chapters, the ideal frames for AROs to use would be ones that are truthful as well as congruent with an animal rights ideology (deontological), first and foremost, as well as being effective at meeting animal rights goals (utilitarian). The former deontological concerns are primary to the thesis that animal rights organization messages should be informed by animal rights ideology. What is true or authentic to a social movement's ideology should be expressed as such, in most cases, for integrity and honesty in communication (Baker & Martinson, 2001; Francione, 2006; Hall, 2006a, 2006b; Lakoff, 2004; LaVeck, 2006a, 2006b).

As AROs are part of a challenging movement that seeks a fundamental transformation in worldviews and behaviors, I advocate for some ARO frames to fit Snow, Rochford, Worden, and Benford's (1986) frame *transformation* alignment process, in support of Foucault's (2000) notion of critical transformation and Lakoff's (2004) idea of reframing issues for social change. To do this, the ARO frames must ask the American public for the kind of major change in speciesist worldview that is necessary to promote all animal rights issues in the long-term while still finding a way to resonate with the public. This chapter explains how, and to what extent, AROs did or could construct less speciesist frames that resonate on some level with a largely speciesist American public.

Implications of ARO Framing Choices in this Study

Snow & Benford (1988) categorized components of collective action frames into diagnosis (problems and culprits, if applicable), prognosis (solutions), and motivation. Similarly, for RQ1 and RQ2 in this dissertation, I identified the first two aspects of ARO collective action frames in terms of what problems and solutions they defined. In RQ3, I assessed the values AROs promoted to loosely indicate the motivational component of collective action frames. This section begins with a discussion of the implications of the problem and solution frames constructed by AROs, followed by a discussion of the implications of the values to which they appealed.

RQ1 and RQ2: Problem and Solution Frames

In RQ1, I identified the main problem frames AROs used as: (1) suffering of animals due to cruelty, (2) commodification of animals as economic units, (3) harmfulness of animal agribusiness to humans and the environment, and (4) the needless

killing and death of animals for human food. The blame component was overwhelmingly aimed at animal agribusiness, particularly factory farms, and, secondarily, consumer demand for animal products. In RQ2, I found that to solve all of these problems, AROs overwhelmingly relied on consumers to become vegetarian or reduce consumption of animal products. In some instances, FS and PETA also promoted agribusiness "humane" reforms, whether legal or voluntary, as the solution to the main problem frames of suffering and commodification.

Industry reform solutions and its fit with vegan solutions. This industry reform frame makes sense as a logical solution to decreasing the suffering, cruelty, and commodification of NHAs since AROs primarily blamed it on factory farms. This strategy fits with Benford's (1987) theory that problem and solution frames must logically align, but it does not perfectly align with animal rights ideology, as ARO solutions promoting welfare reforms still allow industry to exploit animals but do so in a way that causes them less suffering. As an example, FS was the only ARO who talked about the need for factory farming "humane" reforms and did not always also mention vegetarianism. While this frame makes sense logically, it does not fully align itself with an animal rights ideology.

In the animal ethics chapter I discussed the nuances of the animal rights movement debate over whether or not AROs should promote agribusiness welfare reforms. Some activists and scholars made a utilitarian argument that welfare reforms are a short-term solution to reducing suffering that works in small steps toward the long-term solution of veganism (Park, 2006; Singer, 2006; Singer & Friedrich, 2006). Even

Francione (1996) considered banning some factory farming practices to be aligned with incremental abolition but admitted this tactic is more muddled and problematic than the tactic of promoting veganism. However, I think FS's campaign to ban foie gras may fit Francione's incremental abolition ideal because it is not a welfare improvement but a ban on an entire product and category of farming. Other scholars and activists made a deontological argument that "improving" an exploitative industry it is out of sync with animal rights ideology, adding the utilitarian argument that these reforms undermine vegan objectives by assuaging consumer guilt and possibly helping agribusiness become more profitable by appealing to increasingly conscientious consumers (Dunayer, 2006; Francione, 1996; Hall, 2006b; Lama, 2006; LaVeck, 2006a and 2006b; Lyman, 2006; Mark, 2006; Torres, 2006).

The latter ideological and practical concerns over AROs promoting reform solutions fit with the thesis of this dissertation that favors authentically representing ideology. Similar to LaVeck (2006b), I argue that the industry reform solution frame muddles and weakens the corresponding vegan solution frame aimed at consumers by suggesting that industry can solve the problem instead of insisting industry *is* the problem. Additionally, the emphasis on the animal cruelty and suffering frame by AROs often highlighted the worst or most abusive aspects of factory farming practices. By doing so, it implicitly made less painful or mundane practices of farming animals, such as captivity and use, seem *less* problematic or even *un*problematic by comparison. Therefore, it is illogical that the direct and main solution to the problem of factory farm cruelty and commodification is a lifelong boycott by consumers, as that problem implies,

instead, that agriculture should switch to less inhumane practices. Usually, a boycott is a market-based tactic that is used to leverage economic support against a corporation in favor of demanded improvements. To view veganism as a boycott and market solution to factory farm *cruelty*, specifically, implies that once the industry makes the demanded welfare improvements, consumers will then resume their financial support of that industry.

While AROs did not suggest the latter idea that consumers use veganism as leverage to meet welfare demands, I suggest there is a natural connection between boycotts and reforms which fails to make veganism the logical solution for the problem of poor animal welfare in agribusiness. The logical solution to a problem frame of poor animal welfare is for consumers to financially support *less inhumane animal farms*, but the main problem-solution relationship that was set up in the majority of ARO frames is end suffering/cruelty via *veganism*. However, the AROs often tried to more logically align the problem of cruelty and commodification with the solution of veganism by explaining that the industry *will not* stop its cruel practices because it is untrustworthy, greedy, and uncaring, and, additionally, it *cannot* stop its cruel practices because its profit motive dictates poor animal welfare in order to remain viable in a global market. When AROs included this economic argument against reform in their messages, veganism, rather than eating "humane" animal products, became the more logical solution to the problem of animal suffering.

However, a vegan solution to cruelty does not make as much sense if it is proposed along with an industry humane reform solution, as they inherently contradict

each other and require more complex explanations to work together. Yet PETA and FS did sometimes demand industry improvements (welfare solution) along with asking consumers to go vegetarian (rights solution). This combination of rights and welfare solutions might make more sense if the AROs had explained that the two are *unrelated* by clarifying that veganism is the most ethical solution to the problem and industry reforms are a *separate* solution aimed at mitigating some of the worst farmed animal suffering endured while society at large is transitioning from an animal-based to a plant-based diet or because less conscientious consumers will likely continue to demand animal products. However, this explanation was not clarified in PETA's or FS's messages.

The commodification problem frame and a vegan solution. Rather than the problem frame of cruelty/suffering, the animal commodification problem frame used by AROs could fit more logically with a vegan solution and animal rights ideology as long as objectification is emphasized in a broad sense more so than just emphasizing its resulting suffering, as then more types of animal agriculture can be implicated, not just factory farms. However, in many cases, the AROs referenced standard factory farming practices to indicate how the mass production of animals commodifies them and profits take priority over welfare, which could implicitly exclude critiquing a small, more "traditional" form of animal husbandry. I draw this conclusion because even when AROs argued against "free-range" farming, they often did so based on the argument that most of these farms were not *truly* "free-range," so that still implies that a *true* "free-range" farm, albeit rarer these days, would not be objectifying.

These commodification frames do become more inclusive of problematizing *all* animal agriculture, not just factory farms, when the AROs emphasized the subject status and individuality of each farmed animal, especially when they compared farmed animal individuality to human, dog, or cat individuality. This approach was closer to critiquing *all* use of farmed animals as inherently objectifying, since American society does not allow farming of *subjects*, such as humans, dogs, or cats. Therefore, I conclude that ARO positive frames that emphasized farmed animal individuality and subject status are more in alignment with animal rights ideology than the negative frames that problematized factory farming practices primarily on the basis of being cruel or commodifying.

The problem frame of killing and a solution frame of veganism. I think the AROs' lesser-used problem frame of "killing and taking of life for human food" is the problem frame that best aligns with animal rights ideology as well as a vegan solution. It relates to the former paragraph's discussion in favor of ARO frames that constructed farmed animals' *subject* status as being equal to dogs, cats, or even humans, all of whom are not allowed to be killed for food in the United States. Adding a necessity angle could bolster this frame, as it makes logical sense that if Americans do not *need* to eat animal products to survive, then they cannot morally justify the killing of fellow animal subjects. Some AROs did occasionally mention this necessity angle, or implied it by emphasizing the healthfulness of a vegan diet, but I think necessity should be emphasized as central to determining when the idea of taking anyone's life becomes immoral and when meat does indeed become "murder," as PETA declared. This necessity angle is supported by Hall's (2006a) contention that animal rights should not demonize predation overall, as predation

is unavoidable for carnivorous species, which will be discussed in more detail later in this chapter.

The problem frame of harm to humans and the environment. Another problem frame used by AROs argued that animal products were harmful to people and the environment, which is a form of frame extension (Snow et al, 1986) in applying one problem to other seemingly unrelated issues such a public health and the environment. While self-interested arguments about human health risks (whether it be from eating animal products or from living in an environment polluted by agribusiness) are a legitimate concern that should be mentioned (HRC, 2007), I contend that this frame should not be emphasized by AROs as the *main* concern, and it usually was not, as it is not as directly related to the animal rights ideology that serves as the AROs' primary motivation. Only FARM generally put human health issues above NHA issues, and PETA and FS could only occasionally be accused of doing this in certain communication pieces.

Within this harm frame, *environmental* harm has greater potential than human harm to fit an animal rights ideology, especially if wild NHAs and their habitats are emphasized as deserving protection (LaVeck, 2006b). I found that all AROs included wild species, especially oceanic life, in their environmental sections in addition to mentioning risks to humans. However, I think there is a missed opportunity to emphasize the inherent value of NHA life in these frames to more overtly connect the notion of animal rights to protecting "wild" animals, not just domesticated animals, from human exploitation or unhealthy interference (Hall, 2006b). From a deontological

communication standpoint, this allows the moral frames supporting veganism to directly support other animal rights issues, or animal rights in a broader sense, and not just the single issue of animal farming.

Problem frames and their relation to the value of moral integrity. One issue that I did not list as an explicit "problem" frame was that of consumer moral integrity being challenged by the practice of meat-eating, particularly factory-farmed products. However, I did identify moral integrity as a prominent *value* AROs promoted, and moral integrity was central to the motivational messages that urged consumers to go vegetarian. The fact that AROs suggested farming practices were out of sync with the public's general concern for animal welfare *indirectly* makes moral inconsistency a problem for meat-eating consumers and necessitates their involvement in the solution so they can obtain consonance. Attaching the moral integrity value to problem frames against animal agribusiness was one way that AROs made the vegan solution seem personally relevant to meat-eating audience members who might be experiencing guilt. This does not suggest that the use of the moral integrity value fully aligns a *cruelty* problem frame, specifically, with a vegan solution, as conscientious consumers can still alleviate guilt on the suffering issue by choosing animal products from farms they deem to fit their standards of "humane."

If AROs framed consumer guilt or moral inconsistency as the *problem*, it would indicate that how we humans *feel* about what we do to other animals is more important than the ethicality of what we actually *do* to them. Therefore, I contend that a guilt problem frame would imply that animal farming and meat consumption are not a problem

so long as the consumer has no ethical qualms about supporting it. Therefore, it is more prudent to highlight moral integrity as one of our motivational *value*s rather than making a lack of integrity the *problem*. After all, consumer guilt is the problem from the perspective of animal *agribusiness*, but the exploitation of the animals is the problem from the perspective of *AROs*, and the two should not be conflated (LaVeck, 2006b). This is an example of the importance of *values* in ARO framing choices, as discussed in the next section.

RQ3: Values

For RQ3, I examined how ARO food advocacy messages position the human subject in terms of what values humans are said to possess or should possess that might motivate them to concur with the AROs' proposed solutions. The main values AROs promoted, in addition to health and environmental stewardship, were: compassion for other animals, respect for animal sentience and individuality, personal integrity and moral consistency, desire to improve the world and make a difference, choice, pleasurable and convenient food, belonging, life, concern for fellow human beings, honesty, American populism, naturalness, freedom, and American pride. In keeping with suggested social movement organization (SMO) framing and rhetorical strategy (Benford & Snow, 2000; Burke, 1984; Therborn, 1980; Zald, 1996), these values generally fit within American cultural norms, which should enhance their resonance. ARO leaders understood this, as they stated they were promoting values that the public already possessed, namely compassion for animals and an aversion to cruelty. The only time ARO leaders felt they were trying to "change" people's values toward other animals was through suggesting

that people "extend" their animal *welfare* values out from dogs and cats to farmed animals.

I particularly wanted to ascertain if and to what extent AROs promoted values that were representative of animal *rights* ideology, not just welfare. While I think the values that AROs promoted do not usually conflict with or contradict animal rights values, only certain values actually *promoted* an animal rights viewpoint. And these values only did so when AROs specifically framed them in ways that created this connection. ARO values that were either informed by or promoted an animal rights ideology, to some extent, were: compassion, respect for sentience and individuality, moral integrity and consistency, honesty, life, freedom, naturalness, belonging, and desire to make a difference. In the following sections, I discuss how each value was or could be related to animal rights.

Value: Compassion. While the notion of compassion resonates with popular sentiment because it connotes concern for the welfare of other animals, the AROs optimistically implied, but did not overtly state, that people's compassion for animal welfare will extend to an animal rights perspective that animals should not be exploited or killed. For example, according to ARO frames, the problem that incites compassion is viewing factory farm cruelty (a welfare frame), but AROs then associated this compassion with leading people to a vegan solution (rights frame) and not with switching to less inhumane animal products. So, by this association, AROs applied a deeper or stricter meaning to the concept of compassion and implied that to be *truly* compassionate

is to avoid killing or exploiting any animals, including fish, for food. This is an example of frame amplification (Snow et al, 1986).

The value that is more directly related to the principle prohibiting farmed animal killing and exploitation is *justice* instead of compassion. While compassion is a necessary first step or component of justice, as it creates an initial concern and caring for other sentient beings, it is not as fundamental or direct as justice is at implying that these animals have a right not to be owned as a resource. ARO appeals to compassion tended to be more restricted to the notion of avoiding suffering and cruelty. So, they condemned certain poor husbandry practices more than they condemned the entire practice or concept of animal farming.

Value: Respect for sentience and individuality of other animals. Appeals to compassion generally did not ask the audience to think of farmed animals much *differently*, as these appeals relied on audience members *already* viewing farmed animals as sentient beings who are capable of feeling pain. So these compassion appeals implied that people respect farmed animal sentience, at least related to pain and suffering, through the AROs' prominent use of the cruelty problem frame. But the value of respect for sentience can be framed to be more transformational in favor of animal rights if the frames convince people that farmed animals not only feel pain but are individuals who have emotions, consciousness, and unique personalities. Then a person's respect for farmed animal sentience might presumably deepen into seeing them as individuals who have the same right not to be eaten as do other individuals, such as humans or dogs, based on the fact that Americans generally view the latter as individual *subjects* not

objects. AROs, particularly FS, PETA, and COK, often did promote the idea that farmed animals were unique, thinking, feeling, individuals, but PETA was the only ARO who included fish in this category and encouraged people's respect for individuality to apply to sea animals, which can be categorized as a frame transformation alignment process (Snow et al., 1986). Even more transformational, in terms of animal rights, is the idea that other animals' subject status is similar to that of humans, as we are all animals. Most AROs did not openly state this human analogy, with PETA perhaps using it more than other AROs.

Value: Moral integrity and consistency. Directly related to valuing farmed animals as fellow "subjects of a life" (Regan, 2004, p. 185), is the desire to value one's own moral integrity by respecting the rights of these fellow subjects in a consistent manner. AROs' frequent use of dog and cat comparisons with farmed animals makes logical and moral sense as a way to encourage people to question the irrationality of the status quo's unjustified categorization of some animals into subjects and some into objects. Statements such as PETA's "If you wouldn't eat your dog, you shouldn't eat fish," are an important first step in getting people to acknowledge that they avoid eating *certain* animals for moral reasons, so they should also consider the moral inconsistency of their eating *any* animal. The latter is an example of frame bridging (Snow et al., 1986) through attempting to extend animal welfare concepts, including the idea of abstaining from killing, out from one nonhuman to another.

But the use of the moral consistency value has limitations similar to the value of respect for sentience and individuality if all the comparisons are restricted to being

between farmed animals and other domesticated *nonhuman* animals, since this tends to draw mainly upon a desire for consistent application or expansion of current animal *welfare* values only. AROs are not taking the opportunity to promote animal *rights* values that would challenge the human/animal dualism and compare the subject status of farmed animals to that of human animals.

Part of an appeal to the value of moral consistency could be to ask people to consistently apply some of their values of justice and rights, as typically directed mainly at *humans*, to nonhuman animals, namely domesticated animals we have tended to use for food. These human rights and justice values include the right not to be exploited or enslaved and the right not to be killed, if one is not guilty of any violent crime. As women and people of color have a history of being discriminated against on the basis of their association with lowly nonhuman animals (Adams, 1990; Speigel, 1997), AROs could more frequently draw upon ideas of moral progress and human social justice analogies, abstracting them where appropriate to fit NHAs, as do Regan (2003), Singer (1990), Francione (1996), and Hall (2006a).

I believe the process of expanding the idea of basic human rights and applying it to the treatment of other animals is an example of frame transformation (Snow et al., 1986). But ARO messages in this study rarely drew upon transformational human rights analogies, instead frequently relying more on frame bridging by asking for protection for farmed animals similar to what America provides for dogs and cats. As I explained in Chapter Two, to clarify the boundaries of this analogy, animal rights specifically asks for human rights values to apply to NHAs only to the point of preventing domestication,

exploitation, and unnecessary killing of NHAs *by humans*, based on our Western *culture's* ethical principles. But it does not dictate that humans interfere with the natural predation cycle followed between groups of wild NHAs, according to their society's culture or ecological principles found in *nature.*

When one considers how a moral integrity frame toward human rights would not tend to highlight the value of consumer choice but rather civic obligation to uphold rights, I believe that, similarly, the value of showing moral consistency in extending rights to fellow animal subjects should be complemented with an "ethical obligation" value more so than the "choice" value that AROs tended to emphasize. While ethical veganism *is* a choice, as it is not illegal to eat farmed animals, it is better aligned philosophically with a justice frame than it is with a consumer choice frame, as the latter may make veganism another trendy lifestyle choice instead of an ethical obligation (Maurer, 2002).

Value: Honesty. A subset of moral integrity is an appeal to honesty. AROs use this but largely in terms of appealing to consumers' desire for honesty from agricultural marketing concerning the reality of its animal welfare and environmental practices. But within a moral integrity frame, appeals to the honesty of consumers should interrogate their acknowledgement of their own role in agribusiness problems. All ARO problem frames that blamed the consumer (as discussed in RQ1) implied consumers need to take an honest look at the "reality" of factory farming cruelty and environmental destruction which agribusiness hides from them.

PETA also used an isolated, but useful, honesty frame telling parents they should not have to lie to their kids about where their food comes from. This implied that adult Americans are ashamed of the killing of animals for food and know it would emotionally upset children, so they remain complicit in hiding the violence they financially and tacitly support. An honesty frame could state that one should willingly, openly, and frequently confront the agricultural practices and consequences behind one's food choices to ensure they are in accordance with one's own values in order to maintain moral integrity and model that value for one's children.

Value: Life. Every ARO, with the exception of VO, alluded to valuing life. I believe life to be a central component of animal rights, as in other animals having the right not to have their lives taken by humans, except in self-defense. The right of all animals to their own life is more central to animal rights ideology than is the right to be treated well in captivity, so I believe AROs should more frequently appeal to people's value for protecting and maintaining life over death, instead of primarily appealing to compassion for suffering. Additionally, times when AROs portrayed farmed animals requesting and desiring that we save their lives, such as in some FS stickers, also complemented the previous value of respecting their sentience and ability to experience emotions and consciousness. The idea is that humans should value the life of anyone else who has the ability to value his or her own life too. This allows AROs to draw comparisons that can break down the false human/animal dichotomy by showing how all animals, human and nonhuman, value their own lives. FS used this approach on a t-shirt

featuring Buddha's quote, "All beings tremble before violence. All fear death. All love life."

Value: Freedom. Besides FS saying its sanctuary residents enjoyed freedom and PETA once saying "everyone wants to be free," the value of freedom was implied more than it was explicitly mentioned; AROs conversely emphasized and problematized the confinement, crowding, immobilization, lack of space, and lack of outdoor access on factory farms. AROs contrasted this immobility with visuals showing the relative freedom of rescued farmed animals outdoors in a sanctuary setting reminiscent of a small family farm and with the few images of "food" animal species in the wild, especially fish. One of the problems discussed in the findings chapter was that these visuals set up an implied definition of freedom that does not mean freedom from domestication and farming but simply freedom from indoor, intensive confinement. This tacitly supports small, less inhumane, free-range farming rather than supporting the idea that NHAs should own their own bodies and be free to control their own lives. Some AROs, such as PETA, got closest to this latter frame through occasionally discussing the rights of dairy cows and egg-laying hens to own their own offspring, milk, and eggs.

Related to freedom is the notion of control over one's body and choices. This was emphasized by some of COK's messages that stated humans have a choice but these farmed animals do not, implying that the farmed animals are stuck in a bad situation through no fault of their own but humans have the freedom to choose whether or not to free them from this bad situation. This frame could be more explicitly tied to freedom and related notions of choice and opportunity if it explained that while *wild* animals often

have the opportunity to escape being eaten by predators, *farmed* animals are given no such opportunity to avoid becoming prey, in this case to a human predator. Then the frame emphasizing the lack of freedom and forced captivity can link up with *natural* principles of freedom and "survival of the fittest" (Darwin, 1859) as well as American *cultural* principles supporting justice, fairness, and opportunity.

I argue appeals to the value of American pride should align with notions of freedom rather than the AROs' tendency to appeal to American pride based on a somewhat humanist and elitist idea of America's advanced civilization and "humanity." Freedom and liberty are positive principles that are heavily associated with the rhetoric of America. America's Declaration of Independence proclaims everyone's rights to "life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness," the national anthem declares America to be "the land of the free," and the pledge of allegiance claims America provides "liberty and justice to all." Therefore, ARO messages aimed at Americans could cite freedom terminology more explicitly to align the animal rights movement with accepted democratic principles that resonate with the American public and are commonly part of rights movements (Bormann, 1971; Campbell, 1989). This frame amplifies or transforms the idea of having the right to freedom so it applies to other animals in order that they may seek their own versions of life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness, free from exploitation. While this freedom frame is more logically applied to "wild" or free NHAs who are commercially caught for food, particularly fish, it could also be used to emphasize the animal rights principle that it is not in anyone's best interest to be domesticated and kept in captivity.

Freedom is a complicated frame in the case of farmed animals who have been selectively bred in captivity and are no longer equipped to survive in the wild. Frames could explain the vision that NHAs should have basic freedom over the right to their life and to own their own body, milk, eggs, and offspring, as all wild animals do. But this freedom frame would then need to clarify that the animal rights movement generally does not intend that all farmed animals should be set free into the woods, but, rather, the movement seeks an end to their intentional breeding and use by humans (Singer, 1990). It should be admitted that this would likely result in the eventual extinction of most highly-domesticated farmed animal breeds who no longer have a place in the ecosystem and are more adapted to rapidly and painfully growing unnaturally fat than they are to living in a natural environment.

Value: Naturalness. Freedom also ties into the value of naturalness, as other animals in nature do not farm other species in captivity as a food resource. So while ARO frames generally appealed to naturalness by framing *factory farming* and slaughterhouse practices as "unnatural" in comparison to traditional animal farming, AROs could extend a naturalness frame out to communicate that *any farming* of other animals for food is itself unnatural when viewed in relation to common forms of predation in nature. However, this frame is complicated by the fact that humans have practiced animal agriculture for thousands of years (Mason, 1997), so a counterargument may be that farming has become naturalized for our species and those domesticated NHA species, as well as the fact that plant agriculture is largely unnatural too (Pollan, 2006). Therefore, I suggest appeals to animal agriculture's unnaturalness are best done within a meta-frame

of freedom or justice. This also acknowledges that an action's "naturalness" may contribute to its ethicality, as I argued in Chapter Two. I clarified that ethics are a blend of both natural *and* cultural principles. Therefore, the justice and freedom frames provide the *cultural* values which are complemented by the "*natural*" value of avoiding unnatural predation.

In addition, ARO appeals to the naturalness of a plant-based diet for human nutrition were associated with the value of health. At some point in any vegetarian argument, AROs must use a health frame to validate the diet, although these anthropocentric appeals should not be more prominent than NHA-centered appeals. A health argument is useful to demonstrate that predation is *unnecessary* to human survival in cases where a variety of plant-based proteins are available. Proof that animal products are unnecessary to human health in America is integral to supporting the frame that problematizes the killing of animals for human food.

For honesty in communication, AROs should take care not to make health or naturalness claims that go beyond what can be well-substantiated, and those references should be clearly cited. It was not the goal of this dissertation to assess the accuracy of claims made by AROs, but I did discover in the interviews with ARO leaders that no one took an extreme utilitarian position of stating they would intentionally misrepresent the facts to achieve animal rights goals. Erica (COK) said COK is not a nutrition organization and prefers to refer people to other sources if they want more health information, which seems like an honest way for an ARO to approach the topic.

VO's co-founder and President Jack Norris actually is a registered dietician. With its *Guide to Cruelty-Free Eating,* VO is perhaps the most careful and conservative ARO in addressing the health topic and explaining any issues, not glossing over potentially negative information. Because of industrialized agriculture, Americans do not obtain their food as their ancestors did in the wild, so there are a few potential issues of nutrient deficiency with a modern, solely plant-based diet, such as vitamin B-12, of which potential vegans should be made aware (Mason, 1997; Melina, Davis & Harrison, 1995). These issues can be overcome with supplementation and planning (ADA, 2003; Melina, Davis & Harrison, 1995), but they should be openly addressed along with explanations of why these modern issues exist, so the naturalness frame is still supported. To foster honest communication, if AROs are going to point out any potential risks with modern *animal*-based products or diets, they should be willing to point out any potential risks with a modern, solely *plant*-based diet.

Providing basic, accurate nutrition details to aspiring vegans, or pointing them to reliable health sources, is part of a commitment to communication ethics that builds credibility for animal rights and shows a related concern for the human animal. In fact Bruce (PETA) stated that PETA cares about humans too as fellow animals, so he did not think there was any conflict with an ARO focusing on human health, implying it was a deontological choice more than a utilitarian one. But other AROs tended to admit a more utilitarian motivation in using the health frame for largely strategic reasons, as people were naturally motivated, at least in part, by self-interest. Additionally, Erica's (COK)

emphasis on providing *tools* that could keep people healthy and happy on a long-term vegan diet is another way that the health or naturalness frame can be utilitarian.

Value: Belonging. When AROs such as PETA and FS show the diversity of people who are going vegetarian and let the public know there are millions of people choosing this diet, it provides validation that this is not just a subculture of alternative youth or hippies. This practice of emphasizing diversity fits with Tarrow's (1998) framing challenge to avoid creating a narrow or elitist identity when attempting to build unity and attract people to the movement. Through PETA's use of celebrities, and FS also using moral leaders in its vegetarian guide, these AROs built a concept of unity or identity based on people holding similar values and acting with integrity rather than on age, race, gender, or style. However, while there was diversity, photos still favored attractive, younger, white people. I found that FS, especially, and PETA to an extent, did a good job in emphasizing the moral reasoning behind the celebrities' and leaders' choices to be vegetarian so that the focus was put on animal ethics as the unifying rationale. FS's use of the theme that you are in "good company" highlights belonging to or emulating a group of people who have ethical principles, rather than just a group of people who are well-known or physically attractive.

PETA appealed to the value of belonging more than any other ARO since it often featured current celebrities and other "sexy" people, but the focus was sometimes more on health or attractiveness rather than ethical rationales. To maintain focus on the NHAs and to avoid making vegetarianism look like a Hollywood fad, it is important to include leaders from throughout various stages of history and different cultures to ground ethical

vegetarianism in a long history of moral thought, in keeping with communication scholar recommendations to make historical connections between ideas (Ryan, 1991; Therborn, 1980). While most of these historical leaders were men, this can serve the utilitarian purpose of helping a male audience recognize that vegetarianism does not have to be seen as an effeminate dietary choice (Adams, 1990). Additionally, I think AROs should feature stories from former animal farmers and hunters to help provide further diversity in terms of masculine and rural perspectives and to dispel any ideas that vegetarianism is just an urban alternative subculture (Maurer, 2002).

Value: Desire to make a difference. The previous theme of identifying and emulating leaders in practicing ethical vegetarianism is related to the idea that through vegetarianism you as an individual can also make a difference and do something important. AROs did not draw that exact parallel between the reader being as important to social causes as Gandhi or the Dalai Lama, but they sometimes did say that vegetarianism was the "most important" step a person could take everyday to solve a variety of problems caused by animal agribusiness. To provide the motivational aspect of framing, ARO's emphasized the "power" every person has to "make a difference" by saving animal lives, stopping global warming, and protecting the planet. These altruistic messages empower the average American to be an activist at every meal, without any more effort than simply eating plant-based foods. This turns the mundane *private* act of eating, done mostly for pleasure and sustenance, into a *public* act of more social, moral, and political significance.

In support of both deontological and utilitarian communication perspectives, framing veganism as a vehicle for personal growth helps to emphasize the moral and altruistic rationales for veganism and create a stronger identity and commitment than messages that emphasize self-interest (Maurer, 2002). Yet, being proud of oneself and feeling consequential is also in one's own self-interest. While veganism is based on the belief that the lives of *other* animals matter, it also helps the vegan believe that his/her *own* life matters too by recognizing that his/her food choices have far-reaching impacts.

RQ4: Self-Interested versus Altruistic Values

In terms of the ARO messages' application to animal rights ideology, it was encouraging to find (in answering RQ4) that most of the AROs, with the exception of FARM, prioritized altruistic values toward NHAs over anthropocentric, self-interested values. VO and COK put the largest proportion of emphasis on NHA altruism. FS and PETA did as well, but, being larger groups, they also branched out into more anthropocentric issues (both altruistic and self-interested). For ideological integrity, AROs should list altruistic appeals toward NHAs first in all communication pieces that include a variety of rationales for veganism. Then AROs could mention other altruistic values, such as environmentalism, worker issues, and world hunger, followed by human self-interest, such as health, at the end or in the smallest proportion. While deontological, this emphasis on altruistic values also fits with Maurer's (2002) and the Humane Research Council's (HRC, 2007) utilitarian theories that emphasizing the immorality of meat-eating is essential to increasing the number of vegetarians, as opposed to just encouraging meat reduction.

Appeals to the self-interest of health can simultaneously promote altruism by including the mental health benefits, such as consonance and pride, that vegans may receive from making a difference and acting with moral integrity. FARM was the ARO who prioritized health and food attractiveness frames based largely on human self-interest. In fact, Alex from FARM spoke in the interview as if he saw himself more as a marketer of vegan food *products* than a marketer of a social *cause*. However, I argue that frames that prioritize altruism over human self-interest more accurately reflect the AROs' primary commitment to NHAs, specifically, and social justice, generally.

To further reflect this dedication to NHA protection in support of overall animal rights, AROs should place greater emphasis in environmental frames on the negative effects of animal agriculture on wild animal species and their habitats. General discussions of pollution are open to interpretation to be perceived in terms of altruistic or self-interested concerns. This ambiguity can serve the utilitarian purpose of widening its appeal to a variety of readers who have different interests (Perelman & Obrechts-Tyteca, 1969), but it lacks the deontological and transformational purpose of explicitly trying to raise the status people place on the interests of NHA species in comparison to human interests (Singer, 1990).

RQ5: Ethics and Strategy in Communication Decision-Making

In answering RQ5, I concluded that most ARO leaders used a blend of deontological and utilitarian approaches to communication decision-making. All AROs except FARM were more deontological in their overall choice to be more NHA-centric than anthropocentric, but within the spectrum of these NHA-centric appeals, they all

often leaned more toward utilitarianism in their choice to privilege animal *welfare* frames over animal rights frames, as the former is more widely-accepted. AROs asked people to "extend" their existing animal welfare concerns out from companion animals to farmed animals. To put this approach in terms of the frame alignment process, it is an example of frame bridging but not an evolution in taking people from welfare to rights, which would be closer to frame transformation (Snow et al., 1986).

In this frame bridging process, AROs tended to use a two-pronged strategy of first getting people to recognize farmed animals as sentient beings and then to recognize how much farmed animals are suffering in agribusiness. The former approach is more aligned with an animal rights perspective to see farmed animals as fellow subjects, but, as discussed earlier, the transformational aspect of the frame could be improved by including more comparisons to the *human* animal. The latter approach is more aligned with a welfare perspective to emphasize a cruelty and suffering frame instead of putting these within the context of an overall injustice frame critiquing the ownership, breeding, and exploitation of the bodies of fellow subjects.

In deciding which visuals to use to highlight the animal cruelty frame, all AROs were deontological in choosing images that are truthful and reflective of standard agribusiness practices, but they were utilitarian in seeking pictures that would emotionally affect people enough to hopefully inspire change. To add to this utilitarian perspective, Matt (VO) also stated these selected emotional images could not be so disgusting that they kept people from looking.

In selecting which species to feature in visuals, PETA was the most deontological by including the animals, fish, with whom most ARO leaders felt Americans least identified. VO was the most utilitarian in largely excluding fish, but all other AROs also marginalized fish in favor of land animals, despite the massive numbers of sea animals who are used for food. FARM and FS could be said to privilege mammals the most, as they believed Americans most identify with fellow mammals, so VO and COK were means-oriented in their choice to privilege birds, as birds are the land animals who are most exploited. It would seem most deontological to show animal species in relative proportion to the extent to which they are used for food, which would place sea animals and birds as the species most in need of attention.

Regarding the connection between animal moral philosophy and the AROs' message strategy, AROs either separated the two or simplified deeper philosophies to gain greater consensus at a shallower level. FARM, and VO, to an extent, tended to take the former route of selecting strategies largely based on utilitarian concerns for what works best to get people to go vegan or to reduce consumption of animal products rather than privileging messages that best promote animal rights ideology. On the other hand, COK, FS, and PETA were more deontological but still ultimately utilitarian in their preference for simplifying animal rights ideology in their messages so that messages appealed to more widely-accepted aspects of animal ethics, such as compassion and welfare. VO did this too, but Matt was overtly utilitarian in his admissions that (1) he knew VO's focused behavioral messages were limited to helping only *farmed* animals and not animals in other exploitative situations, and (2) he might be willing to discredit

animal rights if it would get more people to stop eating animals. This illustrates how an ARO can emphasize animal cruelty, an ethical issue, in support of an animal rights goal, veganism, yet not be committed to promoting the kind of animal ethics that is authentic to animal rights ideology and serves the broader, long-term goals of the animal rights movement. This constrains the discourse to welfare issues for farmed animals instead of transforming the discourse to encourage people to reevaluate their relationship to animals in all situations.

Regarding the AROs' tendency to embrace popular values and consensus, many ARO leaders did not see themselves as producing persuasive messages. These leaders seem to see their message strategy as more *informative* than persuasive, as they often described their messages as providing "facts" and "reality" and appealing to animal welfare values the public already holds. I concluded that ARO communication messages could be conceptualized as a more progressive version of journalism that is largely providing a different and untold perspective on agriculture so as to enable consumers to make more informed choices in the marketplace – choices that will fit with their personal values and priorities. While the public needs to be educated and learn the untold story of the problems associated with an animal-based diet, and while it makes sense for AROs to appeal to some common values for cultural resonance, AROs should not shy away from embracing a more openly persuasive role in emphasizing key altruistic values that they bridge, extend, or transform to support an animal rights philosophy.

While being more informative than overtly persuasive may seem more democratic or even more ethical, it is not any less ethical for an ARO to serve in its role as an

advocacy organization that is trying to argue for a change in attitudes based on the moral principles the organization holds. It could be stated, according to Baker and Martinson's (2001) ethical principle of communicator authenticity, that to be more openly persuasive, as long as the advocacy organization is not misleading the public or concealing its advocacy status, is more honest than trying to provide more objective information that aligns with the public's values more so than with the values of the advocacy organization.

Additional Recommendations for Animal Rights-Informed Frames

In this section, problem and solution frames are suggested that I think AROs should use to better represent animal rights ideology. First, I discuss recommendations for problem frames focused on injustice, environmental destruction, and, to a lesser extent, cruelty. Then, I suggest engaging the audience as both consumers and citizens to explain their culpability and their capability toward individual and collective solutions. These solutions include: appreciating the mutual subject status of all animals, humans included; eating a solely plant-based diet; and working collectively to create a less speciesist society.

Recommended Problem Frames

Injustice. I contend that the main problem frame should be one of injustice. This frame would be transformational in nature, asking people to reconceptualize the accepted practices of animal agriculture, fishing, and meat-eating as unacceptable practices on the basis that they are, in most cases, unjust and exploitative. This frame could be complemented by promoting values of respect for life, freedom, and the sentience of individual animal subjects. The latter value requires frame bridging to extend people's

respect for the sentience of fellow subjects out from humans and companion animals to NHAs used for food.

The injustice frame should incorporate ethical aspects from nature and culture by highlighting the natural and cultural appreciation for freedom and some allowance for necessary violence. It could also highlight human society's appreciation for justice and fairness in protecting the lives and rights of fellow subjects not to be unjustly killed or exploited. The injustice frame should state that animal agriculture is unfair and unnatural because it includes breeding fellow subjects in captivity, growing them to suit one's needs, and exploiting their body and their offspring for one's own benefit. The exploited subject does not have the natural opportunity to leave the situation and survive on his or her own, nor the freedom to own his or her body and control what is done to it.

Animal *agriculture* is easier to fit in an injustice frame, especially one that relies on naturalness and freedom, than is the practice of *hunting* animals for food. If animal products are required for survival, as they are for human animals in some parts of the world, and always in the case of wild omnivorous and carnivorous animals, then hunting becomes more natural and more justified. Hunting does not involve the captivity and lifelong ownership that agriculture does, so it is less associated with exploitation and enslavement. Therefore, I contend that fishing by humans, as a form of hunting, primarily becomes unjust and unnatural only if the capture and death of sea animals is not necessary for basic human survival. To the extent that humans can survive on plant-based foods and any necessary supplements, they should do this to avoid killing and unnecessary violence per American cultural values (at least as they are consistently

applied toward human subjects). This viewpoint incorporates flexibility around notions of "necessity" in terms of what is required for survival, but it is better to have the debate center on the concepts of necessity and justice over the basic *killing and consumption* of other animals rather than centering on whether or not certain animal *husbandry practices* are inhumane. This follows animal activist suggestions that AROs should control the discourse around the problem of exploitation rather than husbandry practices (Dunayer, 2006; Francione, 1996; Hall, 2006a; LaVeck, 2006a). The notion of necessity within the injustice frame relates it to the AROs' lesser-used frame problematizing the killing and taking of life for human food (discussed in RQ1).

Additionally, I believe the AROs' appeal to what I called "American populist" values, which promotes siding with the little guy against elites and corporations, fits better with the AROs' problem frame of corporate farming cruelty than it does with my proposed injustice problem frame. While this may seem counterintuitive because American populism *is* a pro-justice frame promoting egalitarianism, I think its reliance on anti-corporate values implies that smaller or "family" animal farms are unproblematic because they benefit the middle-class farmer and treat human workers and other animals fairer. The injustice frame, as I am recommending it, is not specifically anti-corporate as much as it is anti-exploitation, anti-enslavement, and anti-killing, whether the perpetrator is a corporation or a single person. The American populism frame may be useful during the limited anthropocentric altruism appeals that highlight the harm caused to humans by modern farming and fishing.

Environmental destruction. The frame of environmental destruction should highlight that it is irresponsible to supply America's largely unnecessary demand for animal products, as this diet requires that all animals, particularly NHAs, pay the costs for the waste and contamination of natural resources needed to sustain all life. This environmental frame extends animal rights goals of veganism out via ecological principles of interdependence to include the environmental movement goals of preservation and ecological health, which makes it an example of the frame extension alignment process (Snow et al., 1986). The chance to unify with the environmental protection movement on the issue of animal-based diets might create a wider appeal and more support via frame extension, which serves both utilitarian and deontological communication goals.

As discussed in Chapter Two, one of the main areas of overlap between animal ethics and environmental ethics is the mutual desire to protect wilderness areas and species from extinction, with animal rights privileging animal species as individuals and seeing plant species more as collective entities which are integral to maintaining the health of wildlife habitats (Regan, 2002). While it is in the interest of both the animal and environmental protection movements to fight factory farming due to its excessive waste and pollution, it is also in the mutual interest of these movements to promote a *plant-based diet* as sustainable, particularly in the United States (FAO, 2006; Singer & Mason, 2006; World Watch, 2004). As AROs are dedicated to protecting the interests of NHAs where they face discrimination and exploitation at the hands of humans, it seems appropriate for American ARO food advocacy to problematize an animal-based diet

based on the notion that it unfairly disadvantages *wild* animals by unnecessarily threatening their lives and habitats. This extends the AROs' food advocacy injustice frame out from domesticated animals to include free or "wild" animals too.

I am not suggesting that AROs must ignore the negative environmental effects of an animal-based diet on *humans*, but it is more in keeping with the goals of animal rights to use its limited resources to speak out especially for NHAs wherever they are unfairly threatened by humans. The environmental frame can also serve as a useful opportunity to deconstruct the human/animal dualism and promote the idea that humans are fellow animal beings who are dependent on the same ecosystems, and humans should not take an excessive amount of the shared resources that all animals require for life (Devall & Sessions, 1985; Taylor, 1993).

Cruelty and suffering. AROs framed problems around cruelty more so than any other issue; earlier in this chapter, the trouble associated with employing a cruelty frame was explained, so I maintain that it should be used selectively. However, there are aspects of it that are in alignment with animal rights, as it shows a concern for NHAs as sentient individuals who are equally interested in avoiding pain and suffering as are humans. Therefore, it is best used to complement a solution that asks humans to see other animals as fellow subjects and to value their sentience and individuality so that humans avoid causing them suffering or treating them like objects.

A key challenge with the cruelty and suffering frame is that it usually constrains the discourse to a debate over animal welfare within agriculture rather than debating the necessity and justice of agriculture itself (Dunayer, 2006; Francione, 1996; Hall, 2006a;

LaVeck, 2006a). If the cruelty frame can prioritize a discussion of how commercial interests dictate animal suffering and commodification in almost *all* cases, even on smaller farms, then people may begin to see that there are not many farms or fishing practices that truly would be capable of eliminating animal suffering and still turning a profit.

This frame of universal suffering in agriculture could, perhaps, be used for utilitarian purposes as a preliminary strategy to explain the reality of modern farming to the public and open the door to introducing the primary frame of injustice. Matt (VO) did state that he viewed VO's approach to focusing on factory farm suffering as a pragmatic "first step" for people who may then evolve toward animal rights over time. But I contend that these initial cruelty frames must be supported to a greater extent by some rights-oriented frames, like injustice, if people are going to be overtly encouraged to begin to consider changing their *values* toward other animals and not just their dietary behavior. I believe a cruelty frame alone does not ideologically lead viewers toward a path of eventual transformation in deconstructing the human/animal dichotomy and challenging speciesism.

Another approach would be to reconceptualize the cruelty frame as a subcategory of an injustice frame, amplifying the idea of cruelty to not only mean suffering *pain* but also suffering the injustice of being enslaved and *used*. Similarly, AROs could incorporate a blame frame placed on the meat-eating public, saying it is cruel to create a market demand for animal products knowing that it causes fellow animals to be subjected to unnecessary objectification and suffering for food.

Additionally, if cruelty frames prioritize the most blatant cruelty and suffering, then factory farms will always get the most attention while fishing and less inhumane or intensive farms will seem less problematic or unproblematic in comparison. Therefore, if and when suffering is problematized, it would be better to emphasize the suffering specifically involved in *death* (for both wild and domesticated "food" animal species) and in other basic agricultural practices that tend to be standard to *all* farms, including smaller, traditional farms. Suffering should include not only physical pain but also *emotional* pain, from family separation, frustration, or fear, to further support the subject status of farmed animals. To demonstrate that animal farming has always involved suffering, even prior to the advent of factory farms, AROs could cite Plutarch's description of the suffering of farmed animals as far back as ancient times and the many nineteenth century descriptions of farmed animal suffering, particularly in slaughterhouses (Walters & Portmess, 1999). The challenge is finding visuals that could capture the notion of how *all* farmed and fished animals suffer and die to become food without always resorting to intensive factory farm or industrialized slaughterhouse images, which too severely limit the discourse to being anti-industrial.

Blame within problem frames. While Mika (2006) concluded that certain meat-eating consumers responded better to a pro-vegetarian frame that blames agriculture not them, I posit that blame should be placed more on consumer demand, as I argue for a more deontological approach than Mika's utilitarian or strategic marketing approach. The blame component of the problem frame should shift emphasis away from agriculture and toward the culpability of consumers for creating a *demand* for animal products and

supporting injustice and killing, as this will better align with the problem frames I suggested in this chapter. Earlier in this chapter I discussed the dilemma with making agriculture the problem, as it constrains the discourse to debating how animal agriculture or commercial fishing should *improve*. While it makes sense that if agribusiness and fisheries are to blame, then they should reform, this supports a *welfare* solution more so than a rights solution. AROs should explain that, collectively, through America's legal system and, individually, through consumer choices, Americans personally and publicly support the exploitation of NHAs for food and its resulting environmental destruction. Linking consumers to the problem fits Derrida's (2004) projection that industrialized violence against animals will ultimately end when we can no longer stand the spectacle of our own immoral behavior.

It is appropriate to acknowledge, as most AROs did, that consumers have not been given much information about the injustice, cruelty, or environmental destruction associated with animal-based foods, so part of the ARO's job is to provide the public with information as evidence supporting these problem frames. Additionally, this may require an interrogation of the Western worldview that unfairly dichotomizes humans from all animals to acknowledge that our society as a *whole* condones and naturalizes certain animal exploitation. This may help explain why individual citizens are generally willing to relinquish knowledge and awareness of exploitative practices and ignore issues facing farmed animals, as society encourages this compliance and lack of consideration (Adams, 1990; Dunayer, 2001; Derrida, 2002). As Derrida (2002) stated, "men do all they can in order to dissimulate this cruelty or to hide it from themselves, in order to

organize on a global scale the forgetting or misunderstanding of this violence" (p. 394). This larger social validation for agricultural ignorance works to the advantage of each individual consumer who wants to eat animals with a clean conscience. While I am tempering individual blame here in favor of putting it in a larger historical, socio-political context, once one's individual role in the system is elucidated, he/she bears a personal responsibility for creating solutions both as a consumer and a citizen.

While it is more challenging to place blame on the very public you are seeking to change, as it may be offensive, AROs can experiment with different utilitarian rhetorical strategies to make the message less offensive or more effective (Mika, 2006). For example, AROs can talk in terms of "consumer demand" or "we" instead of using more accusing and personal "you" messages. In identifying problem frames (RQ1), I provided examples in the findings chapter of how AROs did use these techniques to accuse the meat-eating public of being responsible parties in animal cruelty and environmental destruction.

Recommended Solution Frames

I suggest three main solution frames that relate to the suggested problem frames of injustice (due to exploitation and unnecessary killing) and environmental destruction (that harms wild NHAs, human animals, and habitats), as well as the lesser frame of cruelty and suffering inherent in farming and fishing. The three solutions are: (1) recognizing the mutual subject status of *all* animals, including a subcategory of showing compassion for the suffering of fellow animals, (2) eating a plant-based diet to avoid

exploitation and killing, and (3) working collectively as citizens to deconstruct the speciesist exploitive system and solve problems caused by an animal-based diet.

The first is an attitude or values-based solution, the second is a consumer behavior solution, and the third is an engaged citizen solution. In keeping with the thesis that a deontological communication strategy for animal rights must transform worldviews not just behaviors, a values-based transformation is a critical part of the solution. And while a consumer behavior change is necessary and useful within a market economy, the whole issue should not be treated solely according to a neo-liberal philosophy that encourages individual consumer actions as the premier way to regulate society. Therefore, I also incorporated some governmental and collective action solutions which recognize the target audience members as citizens in addition to consumers. In the following section, each of these three solutions is discussed.

Attitude or values-related solution: Respecting the subject status of fellow sentient animals. As most ARO messages indicated, humans must begin to respect not just the ability of other animals to feel pain but also respect their mutual status as individual subjects of a life. To increase the relevancy and concreteness of this viewpoint, AROs can include their common analogies between farmed animals and other NHAs with subject status, such as dogs and cats. But to deconstruct the human/animal dualism, AROs should also include analogies with the *human* animal and openly acknowledge that humans are also animals. To reduce the humanism in this analogy, the frame should blend ideas of kinship based on evolution and sentience with ideas of diversity to celebrate that all animal species have unique traits that make them inherently valuable

(Freeman, 2007b). This helps avoid the suggestion that other animals have to emulate humans in all ways to be inherently valuable subjects.

Then AROs can ask Americans to consistently apply the values they hold for humans and other subjects toward "food" animals, including fish, as well as toward the "wild" animals with whom they share the planet. This includes valuing life, freedom, and justice so as to avoid the exploitation and unnecessary killing involved in farming and fishing. A related subcategory is to acknowledge and encourage the popular welfare sentiment stating that Americans generally do not want to be responsible for causing suffering to other sentient beings, clarifying that farming and killing inherently involve some suffering.

While this values-based transformation is listed in the solution section, it does not mean that it must be listed so literally by the AROs in their "what can you do" call-to-action message sections of their advocacy communication. It may be used as part of the motivation component or to build a case for the problem component of the collective action frame (Snow & Benford, 1988). The values and attitude transformation is listed here in the solution section of this dissertation mainly to reinforce its importance as a necessary component of the framing process in food advocacy so that solutions are not just defined as behavior-based.

Consumer solution: Eating a plant-based diet. As all AROs stated, the premier solution is to eat a plant-based diet and not consume any animal products. Veganism aligns as a logical behavior-based solution to the recommended problem frames of the injustice of animal farming and fishing's exploitation and killing of subjects as well as

the resulting environmental destruction of wild animals and our shared natural resources. The motivational component of the framing process should utilize the values listed in the previous section to build a case for how this dietary change resonates with the public's own values, mainly altruistic ones.

Additionally, AROs should continue to appeal to the self-interested value of health, to a certain extent, as it is essential to the argument that killing animals is not necessary for human survival. AROs did this through educating the public about the health benefits of a plant-based diet and ways to avoid any health risks, as well as providing tips and tools for transitioning to veganism and maintaining the diet for a lifetime, which fits with vegetarian advocacy recommendations from the Humane Research Council (HRC, 2007). The AROs' appeal to the value of having pleasurable and convenient food on a vegan diet can serve a utilitarian purpose supporting the health frame. Additionally, the AROs' symbolic use of the color green is useful and representative of a plant-based diet, both in terms of the diet's association with healthy, fresh, green plants and with "green" or environmentally-friendly living.

Promoting a vegan or total plant-based diet, especially organic, is preferred to solutions that suggest consumers just reduce their consumption of animal products, as veganism more closely aligns with an animal rights philosophy that states it is wrong to exploit and kill other animals in the majority of cases (Regan, 1975, 2003; Singer, 1990). If AROs are not supportive of reforms to the agricultural industry, then they should not be supportive of reforms to consumers' eating habits and should take an abolitionist approach to both. This recommendation is more deontological than the utilitarian

recommendation by the HRC (2007) that vegetarian advocates would be more effective with a meat-reduction message rather than with a vegetarian message. However, in promoting veganism, AROs do not need to use language which states that it is an "all or nothing" proposition, as that is phrased harshly and competitively, but I contend they should be true to their values in recommending a boycott of animal products as a positive reflection of those values. COK and PETA generally did this. Of course, consumers may choose to just reduce their meat consumption, as the HRC (2007) found a quarter of Americans are willing to do, or they may give up meat but continue eating eggs and dairy, but that is the consumer's own choice and not the proposed solution of the ARO.

In Addition, AROs often appealed to the value of choice in emphasizing a vegan diet, and this served to imply a neo-liberal value that social issues can and should be solved primarily through individual market choices rather than through the accompaniment of legal reform and social movements. It also threatens to limit veganism to a consumer trend (Maurer, 2002). However, the vegan solution does connect consumers with their role as citizens when the frame is accompanied by an appeal to the values of moral integrity and desire to make a difference, as that implies that each person's private actions have public consequences. Those altruistic values also work well in appealing to consumers' other role as American citizens, in support of the following solution.

Citizen solution: Working collectively to solve problems and change the system. AROs favored the individual consumer solutions of changing one's diet, but sometimes, AROs more overtly engaged consumers as citizens, such as when FS asked people to

reform the agricultural system by banning the worst cruelties or when AROs sometimes engaged the public as potential activists who could join their organization and get involved in campaigns. In order to better enable a cultural transformation in support of veganism and animal rights, it is important that the consumer solution is not suggested in isolation of addressing the broader *systemic* issues in American culture, politics, and economics that support legalized animal exploitation and an animal-based diet over a solely plant-based one. To do so, AROs should engage their target audience as both consumers and *citizens* and ask them to take part in changing an exploitive system to protect the lives of other animals and support freedom over domestication. AROs should more actively try to provide a *vision* for the public of the kind of non-speciesist society Americans can create together (Lakoff, 2004).

In keeping with Francione's (1996) idea of incremental abolitionism, AROs should try to find collective action strategies that are in keeping with an animal *rights* philosophy instead of suggesting welfare reforms to the agricultural industry. As Alex of FARM stated in the interview, he is not against welfare reforms coming from animal *welfare* groups, but he is against animal *rights* groups promoting it because it is not authentic to their anti-exploitation position:

> We are in favor of welfare reforms. We are just not in favor of animal rights advocating those because it leaves the wrong impression with the consuming public. It gives the impression that we approve of the use of animals - exploitation of animals - for food as long as they are treated a little less reprehensibly. We feel that welfare reforms is something that the animal exploiting industry should be

introducing to try and entice the consumers, the socially conscious consumers, to consume them.

Some collective action solutions could include making animal agribusiness and commercial fishing industries pay for the environmental damage they cause or having their executives serve jail time for breaking environmental laws. For this to be effective, it would first require that citizens ensure that environmental laws do not exclude agriculture. If the animal agriculture industry had to internalize the costs it currently externalizes on society and other species, the price of animal products would likely rise, which might serve some utilitarian purpose of reducing overall consumption of animal products in America. Another agricultural solution is for citizens to ask the United States government to cease subsidies to animal-based agriculture (including plant crops used as farm animal feed) in favor of greater subsidies to plant-based agriculture, especially organic.

An idea, similar to COK's honesty in product labeling campaign, is to require more transparency from the animal agribusiness industry in labeling its products honestly regarding animal welfare conditions, feed and additives, GMO use, and environmental policies. Additionally, citizens should request agribusiness provide greater public and media access to all facilities, including slaughterhouses, with the ability to visually record practices. Related to this idea of increasing the transparency of the industry and the public awareness of the problems associated with an animal-based diet, AROs could ask citizens to request that the news media put these topics on the agenda, not just from a

public health and environmental standpoint but also from an animal rights standpoint that begins to question humans' right to use fellow animals in this way (Freeman, in press).

AROs could also recommend community-based collective action solutions, some of which AROs did in "get involved" sections online. For example, AROs could suggest people request more or solely plant-based food options in local schools or in other community organizations. People could screen documentaries on animal agriculture or hold public forums for discussion of humans' use of other animals for food. People could be encouraged to produce their own media that either explores the problems and solutions proposed by the AROs or simply documents agricultural practices, specifically killing, to help facilitate the public bearing witness to the violent aspects of an animal-based diet. People could be encouraged to participate in civil disobedience or public protests such as at a slaughterhouse. Or people could adopt rescued farmed animals as companions or publicly support farmed animal sanctuaries to help provide more opportunities for the public to engage with these animals as fellow subjects of a life instead of food objects.

Summary and Contributions to Communication Theory and Literature

This section provides a summary of findings and conclusions and expands upon the relationship between the findings and their contributions to academic literature and theory, particularly communications but also animal ethics. Based on Chapter Three's communication theory and literature review, the following subsections are divided into: social movement framing, which largely draws upon sociology; social movement communication strategies and challenges, which draws upon public relations, environmental communication, and sociology; rhetoric of social movements; and

advocacy communication ethics. To begin this section, social movement framing is discussed, including the typology of ARO problem, solution, and motivation frames; the resonance of those frames; recommendations for ARO problem and solution frames; and how those frames exemplify the frame alignment processes of extension, bridging, amplification, and transformation (Snow et al., 1986).

Social Movement Framing

Typology of ARO food issue frames. This study defined and categorized the main frames used by key United States AROs working on national food and farmed animal issues. To structure the findings, Snow & Benford's (1988) collective action frame categories were used as a guide, starting with diagnosis and prognosis, which have some similarities to Gamson's (1992) framing components of injustice and agency. Findings revealed that the problem frames used by AROs included: suffering of animals due to cruelty; commodification of animals into economic objects; harmfulness of animal agribusiness and animal products to humans and the environment; and the needless killing and death of animals for food products. As part of these problem frames, AROs largely blamed animal agribusiness, and to a lesser extent, the fishing industry, for causing cruelty and destruction and hiding it from public view. The AROs sometimes made American consumers of meat, egg, and dairy a secondary responsible party once these consumers were informed of problems associated with an animal-based diet.

For solution frames used by AROs, the most popular was to suggest that consumers eat fewer or no animal products, but FS also promoted humane farming reforms by government and PETA also promoted some humane reforms by industry and

meat retailers. While problem frames tended to show less variance between AROs, solution frames did vary in terms of Benford & Snow's (2000) variance category of flexibility and inclusivity, as some AROs were willing to suggest less rigid dietary changes as well as including industry and government as part of the solution.

While Snow & Benford's (1988) motivation component of collective action frames was not specifically identified, nor was Gamson's (1992) similar identity component, they inspired this study's identification of the major *values* to which AROs appealed in problem and solution framing. These values were: compassion and caring for nonhuman animal suffering and an aversion to cruelty; respect for the sentience and individuality of other animals; moral integrity and consistency; desire to improve the world and make a difference; choice; pleasurable and convenient food; belonging; life; naturalness; honesty; concern for fellow human beings; American populism and accountability of big business and government to the people; freedom; and American pride.

Frame resonance of ARO choices. It is important for frames to resonate with the culture and values of the intended public (Benford & Snow, 2000; Johnston & Noakes, 2005; Polletta, 2006; Tarrow, 1998; Zald, 1996). Frame resonance is dependent on both the *credibility* of the speaker and message and the *salience* of its fit with the prioritized values of the individual and society (Benford & Snow, 2000). Regarding the credibility component of frame resonance, in addition to ensuring factual accuracy, AROs could increase their credibility if their message was more congruent with their stated beliefs (Benford & Snow, 2000). This bolsters the thesis that there are utilitarian benefits to a

deontological communication strategy of AROs being more candid in advocating based on an animal rights philosophy rather than privileging animal welfare. However, to the extent that AROs privilege NHA issues over anthropocentric issues in their message strategy, as they usually did, it can only add to their credibility since the ARO's purpose is to advocate on behalf of NHAs. The AROs improved their credibility by not being misanthropic or advocating violence or hatred, as those values would be out of alignment with a movement based on morality and respect (Munro, 1999; Singer, 1990).

In addition, for resonance, Johnston & Noakes (2005) noted that it helps if the speaker is charismatic. While the AROs largely kept their leaders out of the spotlight, PETA's, FS's, and FARM's occasional use of celebrity spokespeople for vegetarianism could be said to add charisma. Johnston & Noakes (2005) also stated that the social movement organization's (SMO) message itself must be logically consistent, timely/relevant, and amplified and compatible with the culture. The AROs' frames are all of these things, except logically consistent in parts, as the problem frame of factory farm cruelty does not fully align with a vegan solution, and industry welfare reform solutions can seem contradictory to the simultaneous vegan solution.

Regarding the *salience* component of frame resonance, frames must fit within a society's overall myths, narratives, ideologies, and identity (Benford & Snow, 2000; Polletta, 2006; Ryan, 1991; Tarrow, 1998). The AROs took this to heart and appealed to values that fit within American culture, particularly American pride, populism, freedom, and choice. Polletta (2006) also suggested that SMOs use resonant stories by selecting narratives that come from the cultural stock and seem familiar, such as linking one's

movement to past freedom fighters and heroes. This concurs with Ryan's (1991) finding that SMOs create resonance by framing themselves as a positive group trying to right moral wrongs in a conflict, weaving facts into a story with mythic plots and characters and culturally acceptable social goals, such as freedom, rights, and compassion. AROs did sometimes use stories of rescues or abuse, where animal activists would be the protagonist and animal agribusiness would be the antagonist, but they did not overtly align themselves with other freedom fighters from American history or allude to human rights movements as frequently as they could have.

Additionally, Benford & Snow (2000) said frames must be commensurate with and relate to the target's personal experiences by not seeming too abstract or distant from his or her everyday life. This fits with the AROs' emphasis on how going vegan allows one to make a difference daily "at every meal" or "with every bite." Additionally, AROs tried to connect with Americans' personal lives by alluding to their companion animals and relating Americans' concern and love for companion animals to how they should begin to treat and view farmed animals based on their equal sentience capabilities.

Related to resonance, Tarrow (1998) proposed tactics for addressing the following three major framing challenges facing SMOs: (1) frame familiarity and its ability to promote action, (2) public acceptance of the frame, and (3) identity inclusiveness. I posit AROs followed Tarrow's advice. First, AROs largely used familiar frames, instead of new ones, but linked them with action, in this case veganism, to avoid passivity. Second, to create greater public acceptance of the frame, AROs used common values instead of divisive ones. And last, to create an identity that avoids being too narrow, AROs did a

good job of building an identity for veganism around the altruistic yet broad value of wanting to make a difference and other popular values such as compassion, respect for life, and freedom. In this way, veganism was framed as politically and morally significant enough to create a positive identity for the vegan as an altruistic person without limiting it to a certain demographic or cultural style.

Recommendations for ARO food issue frames. Through problem frames and motivation/identity frames, AROs often used animal *welfare* ideology to achieve animal *rights* solutions. If frames can be perceived as a recruiting tool for ideologies (Oliver & Johnston, 2005), then these AROs are recruiting based on an expanded notion of animal welfare ideology more so than rights. Therefore, changes to the ARO framing strategy were recommended that would arguably create more alignment between theory and practice, specifically, better aligning deontological ethics and animal rights ideology with the AROs' communication strategy (Baker & Martinson, 2001; Francione, 2006; Hall, 2006a, 2006b; Lakoff, 2004; LaVeck, 2006a, 2006b).

Recommendations included making the main problem frame one of injustice toward farmed animals based on morally consistent respect for the sentience, life, and freedom of fellow subjects. The frame should center upon the exploitation, enslavement, and unnecessary killing of NHAs for food rather than on the cruelty of husbandry practices. Although, based on the value of compassion for fellow subjects, animal suffering could still be problematized where it exists, and has typically existed historically, in all forms of agriculture and fishing, not just factory farming. In addition, the environmental destruction problem frame should increasingly focus on agriculture's

negative effects on *wild* animals and their habitats, which expands the problem of injustice out to free NHAs not just domesticated ones.

To align with a vegan solution, the blame component of problem frames should emphasize consumer demand and consumption of animal products, in the context of acknowledging that speciesism is a systemic problem, more so than primarily blaming the animal food industry. While much of the corporate food industry may use especially unethical means to supply its products, it is not as if the consumer demand for these products is innocent.

The AROs' promotion of a vegan diet would serve as a fitting solution to my recommended problem frames of injustice and environmental destruction, but AROs should be stricter in promoting a boycott of all animal products rather than encouraging a reduction in animal product consumption, as several AROs did. While Benford & Snow (2000) would rightly contend that this rigidity is too exclusive and reduces the appeal of the solution to a larger number of adherents, I support the logical consistency and credibility that AROs will show by adhering closer to their own principles that prohibit the exploitation of other animals as an unnecessary food resource. The AROs' typical allowance for a transition period from animal to plant-based consumption helps to increase the flexibility of the vegan solution frame to a small extent. The vegan solution frame must also explain health-related issues, including the many benefits and any potential risks of eating a solely plant-based diet, for the purpose of fulfilling both utilitarian (appeals to human self-interest) and deontological (truthfulness) goals.

The AROs demonstrated ideological integrity in attempting to create a subject status for NHAs and promoting morally consistent respect for subjects due to sentience. In this effort to transform attitudes about NHAs, AROs are encouraged to more overtly challenge the human/animal dualism by emphasizing *humans'* status as fellow animal subjects. This enables AROs to use human rights, not animal welfare, as a basis for appeals to moral consistency in treatment of NHA subjects.

The last recommended solution was for AROs to more frequently include ideas for collective action and engaged citizenry aimed at incremental abolition of animal exploitation and property status (Francione, 1996). If AROs more frequently addressed the public as citizens, they could avoid implying that individual consumer choices are all that is necessary to overcome the systemic injustices of animal and environmental exploitation in America. In this way, ARO frames comply more with Gamson's (1992) and Benford & Snow's (2000) notion of a "collective action" frame, since social movement theory does not discuss SMOs primarily promoting individual consumer solutions to social justice problems (McAdam, McCarthy, & Zald, 1996). In addition, Hall (2006) and Maurer (2002) expressed concern that frames not limit veganism to a trendy consumer lifestyle choice, as it loses some of its ideological edge and socio-political relevance.

Frame alignment processes. The following paragraphs describe the categorization of relevant frames from this dissertation into the frame alignment processes of extension, bridging, amplification, and transformation, as defined by Snow et al. (1986).

Through *problem* frames, AROs used frame *extension* to extend their concerns over animal agribusiness and a meat-based diet to align with the concerns of other, mainly anthropocentric, movements supporting fair labor and the rights of the working class, equitable food distribution to the world's hungry, public health, disease prevention, and environmental protection. Additionally, through the vegan *solution* frame, AROs extended one's daily meal choices to helping not only farmed animals but these other seemingly unrelated causes of labor, health, hunger, and environment through appealing to people's desire to make a difference.

Snow et al (1986) cautioned that extension can risk diluting the original or primary cause and can be unethical if it is done insincerely just to gain greater resources. For both of these reasons, AROs should continue to make these anthropocentric appeals much less prominent than appeals directly on behalf of their primary constituents, NHAs. However, because humans and wild animals are also animals, AROs can make a broad claim that it is in the ARO's sincere interest to promote protection of *all* categories of animals, besides just farmed animals, where problems converge as they do with animal agriculture. And so long as the principles of the AROs are congruent with the principles of the other movements to which they extend, such as those for social justice, then the extension is at less risk of being insincere or shallow. However, AROs should not resort to leveraging society's anthropocentrism as a tool to save NHAs by default, as that tactic does not challenge the human/animal dualism that is the root cause of animal exploitation and can serve to inadvertently reinforce the idea that human life is more inherently valuable than any NHA's life.

Companion animal welfare was used as a tool for frame *bridging* people's companion animal welfare concerns to farmed animals. AROs often used analogies comparing the similar sentience of farmed animals to that of companion animals in an attempt to use logic and a plea for moral consistency to get the public to transfer their respect for the subject status and individuality of dogs and cats over to land-based farmed animals. The argument is that moral integrity should compel the public to seek similar protections for farmed animals as they seek for companion animals. These protections would include not causing them suffering (welfare value) and not eating them (rights value) because people respect the individual lives of each animal.

Frame *amplification* is particularly useful to movements, such as animal rights, whose values somewhat contradict society's core values and are in need of greater support (Berbrier, 1998). As an example of frame amplification, AROs amplified appeals to American populism and skepticism over the trustworthiness of big business to apply to a critique of animal agribusiness, in particular factory farming; AROs explained how factory farming was cruel to NHAs, destructive to the environment, unfair to human workers, and misleading to consumers. However, this was not a frame that I endorsed, as it problematized corporate farming more than meat-eating and was therefore not promoting or fully aligned with an animal *rights* ideology specifically.

Another example of frame *amplification* was the AROs' implication that people's compassion for many NHAs was deep enough to go beyond just concern over suffering to a concern that NHAs not be *killed*. This definition indirectly amplifies the values of justice and rights as a key component of compassion, although AROs avoided using the

terms "rights" and "justice" directly. It could be argued that these appeals to compassion were closer to a frame *bridging* process connecting welfare-oriented compassionate values with rights-oriented justice values, but it was done without overtly stating this connection. Rather than amplifying compassion for animals to fit principles of justice, it would be more authentic and logical to directly amplify notions of justice toward all *humans* and certain NHAs to apply to justice toward animals used for food. Compassion for fellow subjects could be a subcategory of this justice frame rather than being used as the main frame, as compassion is farther removed from a rights frame.

Of all the frame alignment processes, frame *transformation* is considered the most fundamentally transformative because it embeds new values in society, creates new meanings, and reframes erroneous beliefs so that what previously seemed acceptable is reframed as unjust and problematic (Snow et al., 1986). Therefore, AROs should make use of the frame transformation process, since they are a challenging movement seeking fundamental transformation in speciesist worldviews, particularly to make meat-eating socially unacceptable. Only one instance of this transformation process was identified in this study when PETA attempted to create a subject status for fish. ARO leaders concluded that the American public is less concerned about the welfare of fish than they are about the welfare of land animals used for food, as people do not believe fish are as sentient. So PETA's emphasis on establishing the sentience and capabilities of fish, including having personalities, is an example of frame *transformation*, as it attempts to radically change people's perceptions of these animals, a challenge from which other AROs generally shied away.

According to Snow et al. (1986), frame transformation alignment can be facilitated by using a broad or global interpretive frame, such as a meta-narrative, which reframes many domains of life under a new universe of discourse. I propose that *justice* be the global interpretive frame that AROs should use to create frame transformation. To do so, AROs first need to further engage a more direct comparison of the sentience and individuality of farmed animals to the *human* animal so that humans will be challenged to recognize their own status as an animal and the farmed animal's own status as a fellow subject of a life. This alignment process would then articulate that, for moral consistency and fairness, many of the major justice values Americans already hold in favor of protecting humans and their rights, such as compassion, respect, life, fairness, and freedom, should transfer to protecting other animal subjects. These two major, related transformation frames can be summarized as stating that we are all animals, and, therefore, we should all have the same basic rights to life and liberty.

Based on a meta-narrative of compassion, AROs did use a similar tactic of comparing the sentience capabilities between animals, but largely limited it to comparing land-based *nonhuman* animals, such as farmed and companion animals, not humans. This tactic was categorized as frame *bridging* and not frame transformation, as it did not challenge the prominent human/animal dualism like the human comparison does in justification of a more radical philosophical transformation toward animal rights. However, a frame comparing the rights of *domesticated* NHA species to live as freely and naturally as *wild* NHA species do, *would* be an example of frame transformation in support of animal rights ideology. This animal rights ethic would also loosely align with

a deep ecology ethic that values the naturalness and freedom of wild animals to live less hindered by excessive or unnecessary human interference as fellow animal species who contribute to the health of the ecosystem (Devall & Sessions, 1985). To consider the rights of historically domesticated animals not to be domesticated and exploited, especially when unnecessary for human survival, seems like a radical transformation in American worldviews, which would qualify it as a frame transformation in my estimation.

AROs frames were more likely to approach animal rights, or one might more appropriately call it "animal liberation," from the standpoint of human rights and social justice rather than environmental ethics. As discussed in Chapter Two, animal ethics is ideologically aligned with human rights and the notion of individuals having inherent value more so than it is aligned with environmental ethics and the notion of holism valuing individuals primarily according to their utility to the maintenance of a viable ecosystem (Varner, 1998). But since Wolfe (2003) and Derrida (2004) critiqued animal rights philosophy for its illogical basis in humanism, perhaps AROs should consider Regan's (2002), Hall's (2006a), and Varner's (1998) argument that environmental ethics should better align with animal rights by beginning to privilege the individual's key role within the whole. This would support Hall's (2006a) idea that the animal rights movement should shift from protecting domesticated animals to protecting wild animals and encouraging the rights of all animals to be free.

If AROs openly stated their vision that no animal should be domesticated, based on the fact that the practice is largely uncommon according to natural principles and

morally illogical according to anti-exploitation cultural principles, they would be using principles from both human rights *and* environmental ethics to frame their animal rights appeals for more respectful and natural relationships between humans and other animals. This encourages a *blend* of natural and cultural ethics principles in governing how humans treat NHAs (Freeman, 2007b; Jasper & Nelkin, 1992; Pollan, 2006). This would also support some scholars' desires for more unification between the animal and environmental protection movements (Beers, 2006; Hall, 2006a; Jasper & Nelkin, 1992; Maurer, 2002), but do so using a frame transformation process that *directly* supports animal liberation principles instead of solely using a frame extension process that encourages people to stop eating animals for environmental reasons.

To conclude this subsection on frame alignment, the frame alignment conclusions for this study should be compared to Mika's (2006) framing study categorizing PETA's vegetarian messages from different campaigns into the frame alignment categories of Snow et al. (1986). An adequate comparison cannot be made, however, because Mika largely used different texts from PETA and did not attempt to further categorize and label the specific campaign messages according to collective action framing components of problems, solutions, and motivations as was done in this dissertation. Therefore, the dissertation findings are more specific to creating a typology of ARO food frames, while Mika's findings are more specific to empirically testing which frame alignment processes create more resonance with non-vegetarian audiences.

In further differentiation between the studies, Mika (2006) chose to categorize the "absent referent" (p. 920), a framing method which elucidates the live animal from within

the food object, as being a practice on par with the framing alignment processes of Snow et al. (1986). However, the practice of elucidating the absent referent is too specific to be an abstract alignment process, in my estimation. Therefore, this dissertation first discussed a similar concept not as an *alignment* process but as a problem frame of "objectification of other animals" and a values-based appeal of "respecting animal sentience and individuality." These frames were then categorized using the broader frame alignment process of bridging or transformation to elucidate respect for the absent referent, or animal subject, based on appeals to justice, life, and moral consistency.

Another differentiating factor is that Mika (2006) limited the transformation alignment process to only those messages that were considered "moral shocks" (p. 923), such as "meat is murder" or "to animals, all people are Nazis." The use of incendiary language or shocking visuals does not necessarily define the transformation alignment process as much as it describes levels of aggressiveness in making one's argument, and, therefore, it could also apply to other alignment processes (Snow et al., 1986). In this dissertation, the logical substance of the message itself was prioritized, and its resonance with animal rights ideology, more so than its tone, delivery style, or effectiveness.

Social Movement Communication Challenges and Strategy

Cox (2006) and Gitlin (2003) acknowledged that a key communication dilemma SMOs face is balancing how critical they can be while still remaining within "symbolic legitimacy boundaries" (Cox, 2006, p. 61) to maintain credibility. Yet it is hard to appeal to values that are part of the very system the SMOs are challenging. Gitlin (2003) noted that SMOs walk a line between being assimilated and "blunted" (p. 290) if they are too

moderate and being marginalized and trivialized if they are too critical. In this study, I conclude that AROs' common use of animal *welfare* values is moderate enough to gain them legitimacy, yet the sheer magnitude of the animal suffering they expose on factory farms is powerful enough to keep even this moderate welfare message from being blunted. However, this suffering frame runs the risk that industry can counter-frame itself as solving the problem through humane reform, however misleading that may be, thereby assimilating the issue and becoming animal welfare proponents themselves. Therefore, AROs should frame killing and exploitation as the problem so their messages retain a critical and ideologically-authentic edge, according to Ryan's (1991) suggestions. While this more critical frame certainly does run the risk of the message being marginalized, the risk is reduced if AROs skillfully use frame transformation alignment around the meta-frame of justice.

Related to this debate, SMOs must decide whether to base their appeals on the public's individual self-interest or on altruism (Cox, 2006). Evernden (1985) argued that altruistic, non-anthropocentric appeals are necessary to win long-term support for the environment because appeals to the public's self-interest are ultimately unproductive short-term strategies that reinforce a view of nature as a resource. In support of this, most AROs did tend to favor altruistic appeals, especially focused on altruism toward NHAs. This differs from Maurer's (2002) findings that health was the main frame utilized by most vegetarian advocates, but Maurer included a wider variety of vegetarian organizations in her study besides just animal protection organizations. However, because AROs placed higher emphasis on problematizing suffering and welfare instead of killing

or injustice, they did not significantly work toward a long-term strategy that challenges an instrumental worldview per Evernden's (1985) suggestion.

Cox (2006) distinguished between the pragmatism and short-term focus of *campaign* rhetoric and the long-term goals of *critical* rhetoric, arguing the former often benefit from self-interested, reasonable appeals, while the latter are meant to more broadly challenge existing values to envision new worldviews. Many of the ARO communication pieces studied in this dissertation were not limited to specific, short-term campaigns, as they were mainly designed for direct distribution to the general public and not as moderate, reform materials aimed at the news media, legislators, or industry. Therefore, most of their messages have the flexibility to be more critical than they were and should be aimed at achieving goals of creating a less speciesist society in practice (short-term) *and* in worldview (long-term).

Regarding worldviews, SMOs need to reveal that the public's accepted view of reality is based on a faulty premise (Stewart, Smith & Denton, 2001). To reveal the faulty premise behind the American public's acceptance of meat-eating and farming, AROs provided evidence that animal products are not required for a healthy diet and that farmed animals endure much suffering. The lesser-used frame problematizing killing, and my recommended problem frame of injustice, suggest that a more fundamental faulty premise is Americans' assumption that it is ethical for humans to kill other animal subjects when it is not in self-defense. Ironically, this is something that was denounced as immoral by vegetarian scholars as far back as ancient times in Greece, such as by Pythagoras (Walters & Portmess, 1999).

Stewart et al. (2001) also suggested SMOs define the status quo as a "problem" that warrants the public's immediate attention because it is severe and left unresolved by the authorities. AROs did define factory farming, in particular, and meat-eating, to a large degree, as problems that require the public's immediate intervention through choosing vegetarian foods. But the addition of PETA and FS's reform frames may have sent mixed signals to the audience that government regulations or industry reforms could improve factory farming on their own.

To inspire agency, SMOs should make the audience feel that its assistance will indeed result in a better future and that overcoming the status quo is not impossible (Stewart et al., 2001; Snow et al., 1986). The ARO messages were positive and encouraging about how each person's vegetarianism makes a difference and saves lives. But, considering the vastness of the problem and its roots in human history for thousands of years, the AROs are challenged to provide a vision for a future without animal farming and exploitation. Instead, they tend to focus on the power of each individual to do the right thing. Emphasizing a solution frame based on promoting collective action by engaged citizens can help toward creating a vision of how particular acts of incremental abolition (Francione, 1996) will eventually lead to total abolition of NHA exploitation.

AROs also followed the advice of Stewart et al. (2001) suggesting that SMOs: improve the self-perception of members so that their participation is perceived as morally important work; use co-active strategies that appeal to society's common values while decreasing the credibility and legitimacy of opponents; and mobilize members based on notions of shared identity and values, using nonviolent tactics that garner public

sympathy and support. While PETA tends to be a more controversial group that does not always garner public support (Simonson, 2001), the food advocacy messages studied in this dissertation did not seem offensive and violence was never advocated.

Rhetoric of Social Movements

Similar to how framing literature encourages the construction of messages that resonate and align with audience values, rhetoric literature also suggests that arguments begin from premises upon which the author and audience agree (Perelman & Olbrechts-Tyteca, 1969). Rhetoricians Perelman & Olbrechts-Tyteca (1969) categorized premises into two types: real and preferable. Real premises, such as those based on facts, truths, and probabilities, make it easier for the author to obtain universal acceptance. AROs used real premises when quoting statistics of animal deaths, describing standard agricultural procedures, and citing scientific information in support of sentience, health, and environmental claims. Preferable premises, based on values, have more limited appeal due to their subjectivity, so to create agreement with a wider audience, Perelman & Olbrechts-Tyteca (1969) suggest the use of *abstract* values rather than concrete values for those communicators wanting to change the status quo.

AROs used abstract values such as: compassion, freedom, choice, life, honesty, belonging, health, pleasure and convenience, moral integrity, and desire to make a difference. ARO appeals to farmed animal sentience, environmental stewardship, American populism, and American pride may be considered less abstract. Perelman & Olbrechts-Tyteca (1969) suggest that authors help audiences rank values by emphasizing *quality* over quantity to focus on the rightness or uniqueness of concepts or individuals,

as that which is threatened, irreparable, or priceless is deemed valuable. This aligns with my suggestion that AROs emphasize respect for the sentience, individuality, and life of fellow subjects as inherently valuable as well as continuing to emphasize morality and altruism more so than self-interest. The environmental stewardship frame is also relevant to a quality-based appeal, especially regarding concerns about protecting endangered species and preventing irreparable damage such as climate change and deforestation. The abstract values I propose of emphasizing justice, rights, freedom, and life, and compassion to a lesser degree, fit within rhetoricians' recommendations for creating widespread support based on appealing to culturally accepted principles that are both powerful and ambiguous (Burke, 1984; McGee, 1980; Perelman & Olbrechts-Tyteca, 1969; and Therborn, 1980).

One challenge in using abstract ideas is that authors must create a sense of "presence" or connection in order for the audience to better experience them (Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca, 1969). Film is useful for creating presence, as is the use of narrative and myth because it helps audiences get to know individuals. Similarly, Stewart et al. (2001) said SMOs can create presence through the use of persuasive words, stories, gory pictures, and revelations of inconsistencies in institutional practices. AROs often used many of these tactics by showing video footage that takes the audience to the farm, stockyard, or slaughterhouse, by introducing the audience to rescued animals, along with rescue narratives, and by using visuals that allow the audience to look directly into the eyes of the animal. Analogies between farmed animals and the family pet also seek to create connection and relevance for viewers. This use of analogies to demonstrate

sentience and individuality fits Black's (2003) recommendation that the animal rights movement must animate other animals to raise their status to persons from the reductionist metonyms of objects or property.

If AROs included more *human* analogies, then presence could be created by asking the audience to put *themselves* in the place of the farmed animal or by featuring quotes and portraits of Americans who faced oppression, likely from decades past, describing how they were unfairly objectified and treated "like animals." However, these kinds of challenges to the accepted human/animal dualism are likely to garner less widespread agreement than the AROs' current method of comparing farmed animals to other NHAs, but my thesis advocates for sacrificing some consensus in favor of more openly supporting and promoting animal rights ideology.

Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca (1969) also suggested that communicators make their notions flexible, adaptable, and progressive while making their opponents' ideas seem rigid and outdated. Many AROs did highlight flexibility and some version of progressiveness by discussing the ease of consumers choosing plentiful vegetarian products as part of a moral integrity frame, based on compassion or environmental responsibility. And conversely, AROs showed opponents, the factory farmers, as rigid in the sense of being blinded to animal welfare and environmental stewardship, based on profit motives. But AROs maligned factory farming not for being *outdated* but for being *too modern*, huge, technological, exploitative, and destructive in opposition to bucolic ideals of more traditional American family farming. However, in both of these cases, the flexible and reasonable middle ground then becomes eating fewer animal products, but

ensuring they come from the wild or so-called "humane" smaller farms, which aligns with Pollan's (2006) idea of a conscientious carnivore.

The challenge for AROs is to not appear rigid while still remaining firm in their ethical stance advocating for a vegan diet and the right of NHAs not to be farmed and domesticated. The flexibility of the diet can be expressed by AROs continuing to show the variety of plant-based protein options one can enjoy. Some flexibility in morality comes with applying ecological or natural principles of predation to acknowledge that killing of wild NHAs by humans may be necessary in limited circumstances while still declaring that human cultural principles of justice and rights, when used to govern human behavior toward fellow animal subjects, dictates that killing is only justified when done in self-defense or in times of extreme necessity. It is important that the "opponent" not be limited to just factory farming but that animal agriculture itself be shown as outdated, not technologically, but according to progressive *morals* that acknowledge the subject status of fellow animals and condemn the slavery, exploitation, and unnecessary killing of other subjects. It is ironic to say these morals are "progressive" when one acknowledges that human animals may have naturally lived according to these principles over tens of thousands of years ago, prior to the advent of farming (Mason, 1997).

Historic Rhetorical Debates in U.S. Human Rights Movements

Lessons from the rhetorical analysis of the introductory stages of human rights movements in the United States, in particular the nineteenth century women's rights (Campbell, 1989) and civil rights movements (Bormann, 1971), are relevant to the communication challenges faced in the introductory stages of the modern U.S. animal

rights movement. Similar to the description in Chapter Three of the framing factions within the animal rights movement over whether or not to stick with critical rights-based appeals instead of more moderate welfare appeals, the women's rights movement was divided into factions that Campbell (1989) referred to as ideological purity versus expediency. Bormann (1971) referred to similar abolitionist movement rhetorical factions as agitation versus conversion. These were the inspiration for the dichotomous terminology used in this dissertation to distinguish between deontological or "ideological integrity" message strategies and utilitarian strategies by AROs. Campbell (1989) found that if SMOs used the latter utilitarian strategy for political expediency, it created more unity with the public because it was less threatening to the status quo, but these expedient messages could create more disagreements and factions within the movement because they sometimes contradicted shared ideology (Campbell, 1989). For example, expedient strategies for women's suffrage perpetuated common sexist stereotypes to gain adherents rather than critiquing these stereotypes as the source of the problem (Campbell, 1989). Similarly, I argue that AROs must challenge the human/animal dualism and speciesist worldviews that serve as the basis for NHA exploitation rather than perpetuating speciesist values in an attempt to gain more widespread appeal that is more limited to behavioral changes and welfare reforms.

Based on an analysis of factions within the abolition and civil rights movement, Bormann (1971) recommended that SMOs stick to the strong moral values and rights rhetoric of the agitators to avoid watering down the message like the conversionists did. But conversely, SMOs should situate the rights message within American cultural values

and heroic historical struggles, like the conversionists did, rather than using revolutionary or inflammatory rhetoric like the agitators. AROs in this study loosely followed Bormann's advice by often using a moral message and having it be culturally resonant, positive, nonthreatening to the republic, and sometimes even patriotic.

However, AROs were more utilitarian or "expedient" in their choice to moderate this moral rhetoric, constraining it to "conversionist" welfare appeals rather than more openly appealing to more ideologically powerful concepts like rights and justice, as the agitators did. If AROs are to follow in the footsteps of now celebrated human rights leaders such as Susan B. Anthony, Elizabeth Cady Stanton, William Lloyd Garrison, Frederick Douglass, and Martin Luther King, they need to use messages that maintain ideological integrity by unabashedly asking for rights based on a consistent and fair application of the principles of justice and freedom that Americans hold dear.

Advocacy Ethics

My separation of communication strategies into deontological and utilitarian is also inspired by those two ethical dichotomies within Western philosophy. The public relations literature discussed in Chapter Three favors persuasive communicators making deontological communication choices for fear that utilitarian choices allow the audience to be disadvantaged or harmed in order to benefit the communicating organization (Fitzpatrick & Gauthier, 2001). Deontological choices favor being truthful and avoiding harm, with truthfulness comprising both accuracy and thoroughness (Bivins, 2004). A nuance to this study is that it was not designed to test ARO messages based on a notion of truthfulness that comprises factual accuracy and thoroughness, but rather a notion of

truthfulness based on the *authenticity* of the message's representation of the animal rights ideology that serves as the AROs' motivation. This follows Baker & Martinson's (20001) ethical guideline that the persuader be *authentic*. According to this criterion, communication choices that prioritized ideological integrity are categorized as deontological choices, and choices that prioritized effectiveness and audience acceptance are categorized as utilitarian choices.

In this study, I ascertained whether ARO leaders made communication decisions based more on these deontological (ideological) or utilitarian (effectiveness) concerns. I found AROs used a blend of both deontological and ideological communication strategies. All AROs, except FARM, were more deontological (or authentic) in their overall choice to privilege NHA issues over human issues, but within the spectrum of these NHA-centric appeals, all AROs often leaned more toward utilitarianism in their choice to privilege mainstream animal *welfare* values over more oppositional animal rights values.

In addition to authenticity, the persuasive appeals used by AROs are ethical according to other guidelines set by Baker and Martinson's (2001) TARES principles, such as truthfulness, respect, equity, and social responsibility. This paragraph discusses truthfulness and the subsequent paragraph discusses the remaining TARES principles. While this study was not designed to adequately judge how factually truthful the messages were, AROs appeared to be honest, even though messages were clearly selective. Greater context could be supplied to improve truthfulness in parts, but the limited resources of these non-profit AROs limits space for extreme thoroughness in

printed pieces. One could argue a disclaimer in favor of ARO selectivity by saying that the counter-movement, in this case the agribusiness industry, has vastly more resources to provide their version of the truth to the public if they believe more context is necessary. ARO leaders never stated they would consider willfully misleading the public, and, in fact, several AROs expressed concern that the visuals used be an accurate reflection of standard agricultural practices, not extremes.

Regarding the TARES principle of respect, ARO leaders showed respect for the audience by assuming they were morally decent people who cared about animals and were against cruelty, with Alex from FARM being the least optimistic and favoring legitimate appeals to their self-interest. Leaders did not show contempt for the meat-eating public and seemed optimistic that they would want to reduce animal suffering once they were better informed about the cruelty on factory farms. Occasionally, messages did blame meat-eating consumers for their role in the problem, but these messages were not insulting or rude. The assumption was always that consumers want to do the right thing. In support of the TARES principle of equity, leaders never stated that they were targeting vulnerable populations, especially not with a misleading message, although VO did discuss the common utilitarian strategy of privileging audiences, such as college students, who were more receptive to change. PETA and FS do have communication pieces aimed at children, a vulnerable public, but this study only included text aimed at adults. Regarding the last principle of social responsibility, ARO leaders see themselves as socially responsible, caring people who are dedicating their careers to supporting the

common good, expanding that category to include NHAs. They genuinely believe that the vegan diet they promote will be better for people, other animals, and the planet.

Limitations

Overall, this study attempts to tackle many research questions and pull from multiple academic literatures, which complicates the effort, increases its length, and likely creates more breadth than depth in places. In addition, readers may wish that instead of merely describing what AROs did and what they should do that I had been able to *prove* that my suggestions would be effective and resonate with the public. However, that kind of audience analysis is a different project than a production and representation-focused project like this one. The aim was both to describe how frames could better align with animal rights ideology for increased communication integrity and to build a case for how these animal rights-inspired frames could also be aligned to resonate with the values of the American public, even while attempting to transform some of the more speciesist values. While the goal was to identify frames that could satisfy both deontological and utilitarian requirements, deontological frames were favored, which makes short-term notions of effectiveness less of a priority in this study.

In advocating deontological approaches, I did not emphasize the more primary deontological values of factual accuracy, complete context, and avoidance of harm (Bivins, 2004). Some may argue that these are more important to analyze than the deontological value of ideological authenticity/integrity. This argument has merit. But because I generally do not think that these AROs employ deceitful or harmful communication messages, with the possible exception of some of PETA's more

controversial campaigns being perceived as offensive, I did not choose to prioritize those deontological values. Instead, I chose to focus where, as an activist and scholar, I *did* see a problem, and that was the disconnect between theory, or ideology, and practice.

In speaking to these experienced ARO leaders about their strategic communication strategies, I became concerned that I was suggesting they make strategic changes that might not fit with their more pragmatic goals as small, non-profit organizations. While they are animal *rights* organizations, they may not share my belief that their organization must or should promote a critical animal rights discourse that seeks a change in worldview along with, or prioritized above, a more tangible improvement in short-term behavior. Therefore, in advocating my thesis, I may run into the problem that Cox (2006) identified that most SMOs actually promote *campaign* rhetoric which is necessarily more moderate than *critical* rhetoric. If this is the case, it is not certain *who* is supposed to promote the critical rhetoric of animal rights if it is not the leading national organizations within the social movement.

Perhaps it might just be scholars and independent activists, as they are freer to speak candidly than SMOs are, and are less burdened by fundraising concerns that necessitate that they achieve tangible progress and victories. But, paradoxically, independent activists may lack the resources to adequately mass communicate their critical rhetoric. This fits with the HRC's (2007) pragmatic recommendations that the animal protection movement employ a variety of appeals, both critical and moderate, from different organizations. It also reminds us of the point that each ARO is a different organization, and the organizations in this sample vary in size and history, which affects

resource mobilization and political opportunity factors. This dissertation did not significantly take those organizational differences into account.

For the discourse of AROs to pose a "critical" challenge to speciesist worldviews, AROs need not always directly promote animal rights *philosophy*, per se, using academic references and terminology. But I propose that whatever frames AROs choose should be supportive of and informed by animal rights ideology instead of animal welfare or anthropocentrism so that they are logically aligned to pose a philosophical challenge to the root cause of exploitation, the human/animal dualism. If a convincing case has been built toward this thesis, then the AROs can hopefully find *some* ideas in the framing recommendations of this dissertation that they could apply in their message construction, in keeping with the strategic approach they determine to be successful based on their own experienced communication perspectives.

Future Research

Areas for related future research could include: (a) audience studies on the resonance of AROs' ideologically authentic frame transformations with non-vegetarians, both from the United States and from other cultures, (b) textual analysis of ideology in food advocacy frames of environmental protection organizations, (c) identification of opportunities for ideological frame alignment between the advocacy discourses of AROs, environmental protection organizations, and human social justice organizations to facilitate coalitions, and (d) identification of how ideologically authentic frames and critical rhetorics of all social movements are most successfully mass communicated and

by whom, in contrast to the processes and sources for communicating more moderate messages.

Final Summary

This research adds to the literature on framing, social movements, communication ethics and strategy, and philosophy related to animal and environmental ethics. The textual analysis portion of the dissertation serves as the basis for a unique typology of frames and values constructed by five U.S. animal rights organizations in their national advocacy communication addressing issues with animal farming and fishing and promoting a major dietary shift toward veganism. Interviews with ARO leaders also provide insight into the ethical and strategic basis upon which they made framing choices, and in what ways those chosen frames related to or reflected their ideological beliefs on animal ethics.

Findings reveal AROs framed problems with agribusiness around farmed animal cruelty and commodification, human and environmental harm, and unnecessary killing. ARO solution frames suggested consumers eat a total or largely plant-based diet, and some proposed industry welfare reforms. To motivate audiences, AROs appealed to values, such as: compassion, sentience, moral consistency, desire to make a difference, choice, pleasurable and convenient food, belonging, life, concern for fellow human beings, honesty, American populism, naturalness, freedom, and American pride. Strategically, AROs leaders applied both deontology and utilitarianism in choosing to prioritize NHA altruism rather than human self-interest, but most leaders favored utilitarianism in choosing to privilege animal *welfare* over animal rights for wider appeal.

Overall, while some ARO messages supported animal rights, promoting veganism and respect for NHA subject status, many frames used animal *welfare* ideology to achieve animal *rights* solutions, conservatively avoiding a direct challenge to the dominant human/animal dualism.

In addition to an empirical study, the ideology of animal rights is explored in great detail in this dissertation's chapter on animal ethics, as this ideology serves as the foundation of the belief system motivating AROs and the messages they mass communicate. The goal was to strengthen the ideological and philosophical foundations of animal rights discourse through an interrogation of the dominant human/animal dualism and the tensions related to the relationship between animal ethics, humanism and human rights, and environmental ethics.

This dissertation not only builds theory on animal rights ideology and empirical descriptions on framing that ideology, it is also prescriptive. Strategic recommendations are made in this discussion and conclusion chapter for increasing the ideological integrity of ARO collective action frames (diagnostic, prognostic, and motivational components) and creating opportunities for frame alignment, especially the lesser studied process of frame transformation (Benford & Snow, 2000). To do so, ARO frames should emphasize justice toward domesticated and wild NHAs (embracing animal rights and environmental perspectives), respect, life, freedom, and a shared animality.

The topic of mass communication related to animal farming and a meat-based diet is understudied in communication research, yet it has profound real-world effects on the billions of nonhuman animals killed annually in the food industry, cultural acceptance for

animal rights and/or animal welfare, promotion of anti-instrumental and altruistic moral values in society, equitable food distribution and human health, and environmental protection and sustainability, including the critical issue of reducing global warming.

While this study focuses on the communication challenges facing the animal rights movement, the findings can be abstracted to apply to the common dilemma of challenging movements in determining how they can be critical of the status quo while still remaining resonant and effective at creating major social change, both behaviorally *and* ideologically. This ideological integrity in social movement discourse can enact a *true* transformation if it successfully results in people having "trouble thinking things the way they have been thought" (Foucault, 2000, p. 457).

APPENDIX

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS FOR PARTICIPANTS

- How does your group conceive of humans in relation to other animals?
- What is the mission of your group?
- In what ways does your mission fit or not fit with an animal rights/liberation philosophy (and how would you define animal rights/liberation)?
- To what extent and in what ways does your animal rights/liberation philosophy influence your message strategy related to your food campaigns?
- Explain the history of your food campaign message strategy and why you have chosen your current approach?
- In your current food campaign messages, what is the basic problem as you have chosen to define it for the audience?
- In your food campaigns, do you emphasize dietary changes based on the audience member's self-interested motives or more altruistic motives? Explain your choice.
- To what extent does your choice of motive (self-interest vs. altruistic) affect how your audience members would or would not change their view of other animals?
- What values related to other animals do you assume the proposed audience member already possesses?
- What human values related to other animals do you intend to promote in your food campaign message?

- Do any of these values conflict with each other? If so, how do you reconcile that conflict?
- In what way, if any, do you see your strategy as promoting similarity between humans and other animals?
- In your messages, in what ways, if any, do you think there is a place for the concept of diversity – or difference – regarding humans and other animals?
- What is your strategy with visual imagery?
- How does this visual strategy relate to how you would like your audience to view human beings in relation to other animals?
- Do you believe your campaign messages are influenced more by your theories on animal rights or your theories of what works best to get people to switch their diet?
- How have external factors (like socio-economic, cultural or political factors or counter-framing by opponents) influenced your choice of messages? What about reaching out to Americans in particular?

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